NARRATIV OF
A
MISSION TO INDIA
1844
Vol- I

By :- B. V. FONTANIER

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NARRATIVE

OF A

MISSION TO INDIA,

AND THE COUNTRIES BORDERING ON THE

PERSIAN GULF, &c.

BY WAY OF

EGYPT, AND THE RED SEA.

UNDERTAKEN BY ORDER OF THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT.

BY V. FONTANIER.

VICE-CONSUL OF FRANCE AT BASSORA.

VOL. I.

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ILLUSTRATIVE MAP
to accompany
M. FONTANIER'S TRAVELS
in the East
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
ARAL SEA
CIRCASSIA
ASIA MINOR
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
AFGHANISTAN
PUNJAUB
BALOOCHISTAN
SINDE
GUJERAT
Tropic R.
Orenburg
Krimea
Erzeroum
Khyva
Saucareand
Attock
Caubul
Bagdad
Ispahan
Alexandria
Cairo
Delhi
Cancer
Medina
Djedda
Mekka
Bombay
Socotra
Aden
Mocha
Muskat
Ormuz
Sanaa
Loheya
Shihaum
Dofar

PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the work which I now submit to the public contains a narrative of my Travels in various countries of the East, where I have long resided, and some of which I have visited more than once, yet I do not purpose to describe all those places minutely, as most of them are already sufficiently known, and I am desirous of avoiding details which may be found elsewhere. Intrusted with the charge of watching over the political and commercial interests of France in a large portion of Asia, I shall more especially direct my attention to those topics. Although Eastern questions are worthy of the notice of France, yet her interest in them is not so paramount as is generally imagined, and the exaggerated notions generally entertained on this head have been by no means advantageous to us. Matters of detail, and even the simplest precautions have been neglected, because they were thought inadequate to influence events held to be of the greatest importance.

These events have moreover conferred on my mission more weight than it otherwise could have possessed. Instead of limiting my observations within the ordinary bounds of a Consulate, it became necessary to extend them from Suez to China; from Ceylon to the frontiers of Russia. Communications between Europe and India were established by the way of Suez, during my residence in Asia; it was then also that occurred the rupture between Persia and England, along with the Affghan campaign, followed shortly afterwards by its frightful catastrophe. During the same period, the trade with China was opened, and a quarrel took place between the Sultan and the Pacha of Egypt. Bombay, during the time of my residence there, was the centre of most of these affairs, the progress of which it became necessary for me to watch. I deem this explanation due, lest it should be imagined that I voluntarily undertook a duty which should have been confided to some one of a higher rank and more acknowledged talent.

As the better part of my life has been spent abroad, and as I have never had to give my attention to questions of domestic policy, I shall be less prone to be influenced by party considerations than otherwise might have been the case. I shall not conceal the errors of detail, which, in my opinion, government may have committed; but on the other hand, I shall not hesitate to defend it, when I consider it to have been unjustly attacked.

I do not pretend to speak of the general policy of France, of her alliances, or of her acts in every quarter of the globe. I pity, as much as I admire, those who consider themselves equal to treat so vast a subject. My business is to speak only of that which concerns those parts of Asia which I have visited; and I do not admit, as has been affirmed, that our influence there has decreased; or that our policy has been upon the whole weak, ignorant, and dishonourable. So far from this, it appears to me that the French and English governments alone understood the great question which was raised, and to the solution of which two poor Turks, the Sultan and Pacha of Egypt, have served as the nominal pretexts. This solution has in fact been brought about in strict conformity with the views of France, and has covered with confusion the cabinets of London and St. Petersburgh. The object which both Russia and England have long been aiming at, and which they have not attained, is to share the rule of Asia between them. The triumph of France and the other continental powers would have been more complete, and more prompt, if the Chamber of Deputies had not compelled that able minister to retire, who, up to 1840, had imparted so great a degree of freedom, and such perfect independence to French policy.

I entertain the most profound respect for the representatives of the nation; not only do they give

great weight to the influence of France abroad, but their discussions, taking a higher tone, as their experience daily renders them more practically familiar with affairs, diffuse a useful light over many subjects. I do not pretend to criticise its conduct in 1839, for I am not even acquainted with all the motives by which it was actuated; but I believe, and I hope to prove that in so far as concerns the affairs of the East, the retirement of Count Molé was fatal to our policy. Let us bear in mind that whenever the Chamber, either by its addresses or by its amendments, takes the initiative in foreign affairs, it runs the risk of coming to a decision upon insufficient grounds. When a discussion arises upon a matter of this sort, it usually happens that but one person is intimately acquainted with the facts of the case: that person is the Minister, who on most occasions ought not to divulge them. The debate gives rise to oratorical struggles, brilliant it is true, but seldom leading to any practical result. These displays lead astray the noblest minds, and cause them to forget that it is far easier to give utterance to an eloquent speech, in which the orator arranges matters after his own fashion, than to discuss particular questions usefully and rationally.

In this eloquent strife waged upon an imaginary ground, it must be confessed the least adventurous combatants are not always upon the side of the government. These contests of wit are sometimes

dangerous in a Legislative Assembly, as proved to be the case in 1840. The ministry which succeeded M. Molé, in its opening address to the Chambers, directed their attention at once to the affairs of the East. The Chamber of Deputies exaggerating, as it seems to me, the importance of this question, entrusted the preparation of its answer to one of its most experienced members. By this step it took the initiative; for the reply, commented on during the discussion in a manner by no means circumspect, became when adopted the political rule of the Cabinet. Instead of frankly exposing the manœuvres of England, it merely referred to the Sultan and his vassal; and recommended intervention in terms which most certainly could not be agreeable to other nations whose interest was identical with ours. The Ministry, too recently installed in office to be able to modify the harshness of these views, offered no opposition; and the orators, ignorant of the real state of the case, gave free scope to their imagination.

Such is the true origin of the difficulties with which France has had to deal in its Eastern policy, and they are not to be laid to the charge of the various Ministers who have succeeded each other. Most of these Ministers seem it is true to have been deluded as to the actual condition of Egypt; but this error was of little consequence, as the independence of the Pacha was not the real matter at issue. The Chamber itself, not comprehending the whole

bearing of the question, first overthrew the Minister who had handled it with so much prudence, then assumed the initiative; and the policy of the country thenceforward took a wrong direction.

I anticipate that some of my opinions will encounter contradiction, as they will not be found to agree with generally received ideas. Perhaps like most other agents abroad, I have been too partial to my own country; I would certainly prefer not to deserve this reproach; but I would rather be accused of having praised than of having reviled it. I would willingly have refrained from speaking of the governments of Asia, because this subject has been treated so often, that public opinion is now formed upon it. I have not in any way concealed the little consideration that is due to Mahometans, and have shown no indulgence towards the Pacha of Egypt. The treachery practised by him against his own country ought not to be forgotten or excused. Mehemet Ali, in 1826, broke the most solemn pledges made to one of our Admirals, M. de Rigny; and in 1840, he complained to the enemies of France of her bestowing on him that support which he had actually solicited at her hands. The sentiments I express are identical with those already put forward by one of our most illustrious orators, M. de Lamartine, and I trust they will meet with the approbation of the public.

I fear I shall not be so fortunate when I come to

treat of the establishments of the English in India. Not only is England, from being the centre of an immense trade, enabled to act upon every point of the globe, but her social organization is such that private individuals can engage and urge her on in all sorts of enterprises. From this results a prodigious activity, giving rise to innumerable publications which attract the attention of the world, and bestow on their themes a factitious importance, representing that as grandeur which is often merely turmoil. Is there a man whose imagination does not take fire on beholding an empire with a population of a hundred millions, raised at the extremity of Asia by a handful of Europeans; at beholding disciplined armies led from India to the frontiers of Russia; and an immense kingdom thrown open to a new trade?

I admire as much as any one those conquests of civilization, and the great men by whom they have been accomplished; I admire no less the great art with which so extraordinary a structure is maintained. I have received from the English nought but good treatment, and I entertain for their government, more especially for that of India, a profound respect. But is that a reason why I should not seek to reduce to its proper level the exaggerated admiration with which it has inspired so many minds; why I should not expose the errors of its policy, the injustice of which it is guilty, and the real weakness concealed beneath so

much splendour? Without envy, without bitterness, this task may be undertaken; and it will not be an useless one if it give rise to other labours, if it bring forward other testimonies. When, about fifteen years ago, I endeavoured to show the impracticability of imparting an European organization to Mahometan society, I met with but little approbation. Since that period experience has not belied me; and perhaps it will also confirm what I shall advance concerning India, as it has confirmed what I have already said of Turkey.

An author who is anxious to inspire confidence ought, if it be in his power, to show that his assertions do not rest upon slight foundations, and that he has studied the subject he is treating with care. The events which during the last few years have shaken Asia to its very centre are known to every one. If I can furnish proofs that I have in my official capacity predicted a great number of them; if I have asserted that they were the inevitable consequences of certain acts; it ought to be admitted that I have accurately studied those acts and the circumstances which accompanied them. The principal facts are these: English influence was paramount in the Euphrates from 1838 to 1842; I wrote in 1836 that they would try to establish their sway there. The rupture between England and Persia occurred in 1838; I announced it in 1837, and by whom and through what motives it would be rendered inevitable. At the same time I

foretold the intention of the English to render themselves masters of Aden, which actually took place in 1839. In 1839 I warned Marshal Soult of the probable issue of the campaign in Affghanistan. At that period also I foresaw and prevented the execution of the plan of a certain government to awaken civil war in Persia. It is most assuredly not my fault if too much reliance was placed on the power and sincerity of the Pacha of Egypt. In 1841, I was enabled to send the draft of a treaty between China and England, which was not signed until 1842. I should not so frequently have beheld my opinions confirmed, if I had not studied the country with the utmost assiduity and impartiality.

Political questions are of an ephemeral nature, and depend on circumstances so varied and shifting, that they are constantly assuming new forms, and the events which give birth to them pass at once into the domain of history. I have, therefore, not concealed anything I have seen, or anything I have done, in political affairs; I had no secret orders; I remarked nothing which others could not have observed as well as myself. With respect to commerce, it will be acknowledged, I hope, that I have not neglected this important part of my mission. But commercial observations rest upon permanent interests, and require the more caution inasmuch as they relate to the future. I cannot forget that England was the first to take advantage of the

earliest commercial route to Trebizond, which I had long before pointed out. I shall therefore be less explicit on this head; but if I am silent it is with some regret, for it might perhaps have been useful to call public attention to certain commercial questions not devoid of importance, which yet remain unsolved. What most forcibly strikes the traveller on his return to France, is an eagerness for petty intrigues and paltry discussions dignified with the name of politics and parliamentary affairs. It engrosses even ministers themselves, and impedes the progress of all public business. No one heeds the serious matters which claim attention; and thus it often becomes necessary to place before the public much that it would be more advantageous to conceal.

I wished to have confined this work within the limit of two volumes, but the abundance of my materials has not permitted me to do so, and I have been therefore induced to divide it into two parts. They are so intimately connected together as to form one work, but yet not so closely linked as to prevent me from publishing them separately. The part I now publish, relates to the countries connected with India; the second shall be exclusively devoted to India, and will form two volumes.

PARIS, MARCH, 1844.

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TRAVELS IN EGYPT,

THE RED SEA, THE PERSIAN GULF, INDIA, &c.

CHAPTER I.

EGYPT.

Departure from France—Arrival at Cairo—Obstacles in obtaining correct ideas of Egypt—M. Mimault, French Consul-General—Mehemet Ali—Ibrahim Pacha.

Towards the close of 1834, I received instructions to proceed to the Persian Gulf for the purpose of transmitting to the French government such information as it required relative to the southern provinces of Persia and Turkey. The Embassy was to be apprized of my mission, that it might confer on me such an official character as would secure protection. The title of Vice-Consul, if directly conferred upon me, would not have suited my views, as it would have annulled any claims existing previously to the appointment; it was accordingly decided that, if practicable, I should be nominated as a commercial agent, and that unless such a title should be at variance with the usages of the Porte, nothing should induce the government to depart from this decision.

At the period of my nomination, public attention was actively directed to the attempts made by the English to open more speedy communications with India by the Red Sea or through Syria. They had already despatched a steam-boat from Bombay to Suez, but the experiment had not proved quite satisfactory; they anticipated better results through Syria, and Colonel Chesney received instructions to attempt the navigation of the Euphrates. For several consecutive years, the plague and the cholera had ravaged Babylonia and the shores of the Persian Gulf. Attempts had been meanwhile made to usher into these distant provinces the innovations introduced by the Sultan at Constantinople. The aged monarch of Persia was no more, and his grandson had succeeded to the throne; Russian influence was disputing the supremacy with English ascendancy in that kingdom; and expeditions against the British possessions in India were vaguely spoken of. In fine, the commerce of the Persian Gulf, and the position which the English occupied there, were but imperfectly known. To select and transmit to government such facts as might contribute to throw light upon all these questions, was the outline I had traced of the duties of my intended mission, and which was approved of by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. In order to carry out my plan with advantage, I at first proceeded to London, where I examined the proposed plans of communication with India. After accomplishing the above-mentioned objects I was to go to Bombay by way of Suez; from Bombay I intended going to Bassora, and, after some sojourn there, to return to France by Constantinople.

This plan was only partially carried out, and I shall hereafter explain the motives of the alteration; instead of proceeding through Turkey, I revisited India where I made a long stay, and then returned to France after going round the Cape.

I have been a passenger on board vessels belonging to most nations of the old world; but there is not one of which I retain a more disagreeable recollection than that which took me from Marseilles to Alexandria. It was a small Greco-ragusian brig, and a more dirty, more offensive, or more poverty-stricken craft cannot be imagined. The captain had discovered the means of stowing eleven passengers in the small cabin; and, as I was the last comer, they had prepared a temporary berth for me with four deal boards, which looked very much like a coffin. My fellow-passengers were for the most part Saint Simonians, who were going to join their chief in Egypt. Full of fervour, and carried away with illusions, they believed, alas! that they should find the promised land, and could not comprehend the feelings of scorn which I experienced on beholding them abandon themselves to such vain fancies. However, our discussions tended to destroy the monotony of the passage, which lasted seventeen days, and offered nothing remarkable but the diet to which we were subjected. Each day two unfortunate fowls were condemned to death; and I shall never forget the regular preparations through which they passed; one of the sailors, who filled the functions of cook, chopped them to pieces, after they were plucked, and they then served to make a wretched soup; taken out

of the broth and mixed with potatoes, they might have formed a dish, if the cook, in order to increase its bulk, had not taken the precaution to throw in the broken bones, which penetrated our gums, and obliged us to eat with the greatest precaution. Our main support was kidney-beans and potatoes made into a salad. Consequently, no sooner had I arrived at Alexandria, where M. de Lesseps was kind enough to receive me, than my first care was to ask for something to eat. A British officer, who had been our fellow-passenger, unexpectedly arrived whilst I was at table, and my host supposing him to be quite as famished as myself, invited him to keep me company, which he readily acceded to.

Captain Wroughton belonged to the Company's service, and died shortly after his arrival at Bombay; he had like myself been informed that Alexandria was to be put under quarantine on the following day, and that it was necessary to start immediately for Cairo if we wished to avoid delay. Thanks to the kindness of M. de Lesseps, we were enabled to procure a boat, and prepared to depart. On the following morning all was ready, and several of our quondam passengers with whom we had been on intimate terms having joined us, we embarked upon the canal, Mahmoudiah, and arrived at Cairo three days afterwards. Nothing occurred in this short voyage worth noticing unless it was our insatiable appetite, for we dined no less than five times the first day. Peradventure, the brilliant chimeras with which my companions had rocked themselves, began also to disperse; a populace in rags; beggars surrounding our

boat; huts in ruins; and the dread which was depicted upon every countenance, proved clearly that we had not found a new El Dorado.

It is not my intention to write a tour through Egypt, nor to enter into long details as regards that country. Egypt has been singularly over-estimated by men whose good faith and talents are incontestible; the errors into which both private individuals and the government itself have fallen have been so disastrous to France, that it is interesting to inquire into their causes. The delusive importance which the chief of a despotic state acquires amongst civilized nations is well known; few are the qualifications he requires to cause him to be looked upon as a genius. In Russia, for instance, the Emperor who passed, before his accession to the throne, for a man of slender abilities; who, since then, has only rendered himself remarkable for his tyranny, by strange caprices and incredible pretensions, is now-a-days considered a prodigy of wisdom—a demi-god. This tendency to overrate is not so prevalent with the Asiatics, accustomed as they are to reverses; if they nourish a legitimate fear of the grandees of the earth, it is certainly not through esteem for their persons, nor respect for their talents. But they are cautious in expressing their sentiments, and any one, while under the jurisdiction of a prince, or a governor, or the most miserable chief of a village, who did not loudly bless him would pass for an idiot. Complaint is only tolerated when it comes from higher authority. It is, therefore, quite evident that to inquire of the Egyptians if they are satisfied with their Pacha; if they are happy or well

treated; is to ask so many useless questions. Unless you inhabit the country, speak their language, and obtain the confidence of the inhabitants, you will hear nothing but abundance of praise. The mass of the population cannot, it is evident, be consulted by travellers who seek to ascertain their state. Neither does the enquirer stand a better chance of gaining information by consulting foreigners who reside in the country. Some of these are employed by government, and others are established there for commercial purposes. I do not suspect the impartiality of all these parties; but, besides the involuntary illusions which most Europeans form, as regards men armed with great authority, it is evident that the majority of foreign residents would compromise themselves in frankly expressing opinions unfavourable to the head of the State, or to his administration. If a government officer be denounced as a lukewarm admirer of the Pacha, he loses his place; if a similar accusation be made against a merchant, no more cotton will be sold to him, and he will no longer have any profitable contracts; his ruin is sure to follow. The above are some of the real difficulties which those who have written about Egypt have had to encounter, and they are not the only ones.

Mehemet Ali Pacha has governed that country for a great number of years, and his intercourse with Europeans has been frequent. He knows far better than the major part of his fellow-countrymen, whose adroitness in this respect is remarkable, how to say that which shall please, how to make a show of philosophy, and display noble senti-

ments before those whose approbation he seeks. But he also possesses the art of mingling with the most ostentatious reception certain forms, which in the presence of the faithful, testify his utter contempt for the unbelievers; his guests do not observe this, nor do they imagine that, after their departure, they have become the objects of raillery both of the Pacha and his courtiers. This system, added to a generosity rarely to be met with among the Turks, causes Mehemet Ali to be regarded by Europeans as an innovator, whilst in Turkey he is looked upon as the last of the Janissaries. Independent of the art of flattery—repeating at night all what he has heard during the morning—Mehemet Ali is a great adept in quackery. Nothing pleases him more than to occupy public attention; compliments, presents, all sorts of encouragement are reserved for those who flatter and praise him, or make mention of his name in the newspapers. It is therefore not surprising that his fame has outstepped his merit, and that he passes for a great man in the estimation of the multitude.

As to his government, what could be more humiliating than the confession made by one of our ministers regarding Egypt, before one of the legislative chambers:

"Gentlemen," said M. Guizot, "we have deceived ourselves in the estimate which we made of the strength of the Pacha of Egypt." Undoubtedly, with our official establishments in Egypt, and the number of Frenchmen who travel, or are employed in that country, aided too by the natives who are under our protection, nothing

ought to take place there without our knowing and understanding it better than the Pacha himself. How comes it then that we have been deceived, ay, grossly deceived in so important a matter? I will explain this in a few words. With us the superior authorities are careless in choosing suitable Consuls amongst those they send abroad; they seem to consider such an appointment nothing more than a matter of course, and they do not form a distinctive class destined for Asia. They ought surely to bear in mind that our Consuls and agents must meet with the same difficulties in Egypt which I have already stated thwart the investigations of other travellers. In order to surmount them, it is requisite that they should be acquainted with the habits and dispositions of the Asiatics. This knowledge is not acquired at once, and it cannot be expected to be possessed by persons, however clever they may be, who have been merely educated in Europe, or America, and as frequently happens at Paris only.

If examples were required to prove all that I have urged, I could not find a better one than in the person of M. Mimault, who was our Consul-General when I passed through Egypt. During the two months I resided at Cairo, I took up my abode with him, and consequently was enabled to appreciate his position. Certainly, very few men could be compared to him for the qualities of the heart and the mind; a historian, a man of letters and an antiquarian, he shone conspicuously by the elegance of his manners and the charm his society diffused around him. His life had been spent in the capitals of Europe, and in the

midst of the most eminent personages. He had been one of Prince de Talleyrand's *attachés*, then was promoted to office under the Minister for Foreign Affairs for the Kingdom of Italy; and he was employed as Consul-General at Venice when he was appointed successor to M. Drovetti in Egypt. Now this gentleman, so distinguished wherever he had been, was completely misplaced among the Turks, and his very qualifications prevented his acquiring any great influence amongst them. With the exception of a few travellers, with whom chance placed him in contact, who could appreciate his merits? After having mingled and taken part in so many affairs of importance in Europe, how could he familiarize himself with the puerile disputes, the vile intrigues, and the pettyfogging complaints which occupy the minds of those agents who desire to obtain influence amongst the Mahometans?

M. Mimault turned from these with disgust; the result was that the Consulate was encumbered with complaints from our countrymen who could get no redress. Bestowing his time upon his favourite studies and the society of friends, he did not choose to attend to any other than important affairs; and often waited on the Pacha, who received him with favour. Mehemet, who profited ultimately by the misdoings of his subordinates, was too cunning not to flatter a diplomatic agent who discoursed with him solely about important political questions, or measures for improving Egypt. Moreover, he had discovered an ingenious method for ridding himself of troublesome claims. Amongst the number of his officials was a cunning Armenian, named

Boghos, who had attached himself to his fortunes, and knew Europe tolerably well. Now it sometimes happened that the Pacha purposed hanging him; but changing his mind he again took him into his service. At last he conceived the idea of transforming him into a species of minister; and this man, who at one time could not have presumed to purchase a dozen plates without the consent of the Pacha, issued diplomatic notes in the most solemn manner.

M. Mimault, like his colleagues, committed a fault in receiving these notes, for the government did not stop there; under the pretence that our interpreters spoke badly or failed to please, Boghos offered himself as dragoman to all those whose influence he feared. It soon followed that no business was effected but by him, and that complaints were only made through his intervention; he translating all the discussions in the mode most suited to his own views. Furthermore, he had taken the precaution of choosing his colleagues from his own family; thus his interest was never endangered during his absence. His conduct has elicited, to the present day, the admiration of all the Armenians of the Ottoman empire; all rejoice in the success of a cozenage which has enabled one of their countrymen to become the counsellor and the favourite of one of the most potent Viziers. In fact, after having forced himself upon the European agents, Boghos found but little difficulty in adopting a similar way of acting towards ignorant Turks or poor Arabs. Deluded in this manner, it is not surprising that M. Mimault should become one of the greatest admirers of

the Pacha; under the varnish of a new civilization, he could not discover that Egypt concealed all the vices of Turkish administration; that, with the exception of a greater security for Europeans and Christians, she was perhaps the worst governed and incontestibly the most unfortunate province of the Ottoman empire. He communicated his false views to his hearers, by the fascination of his conversation, and to his government by the authority of his talent; and he contributed more than any other person to lead France into that path of errors which in 1840 very nearly proved fatal to her.

It must not be supposed that I am advancing an isolated opinion. If I have heard those whose rank permitted them to mix familiarly with our Consul-General, and who from duty or gratitude praised the Pacha, and trumpeted his fame, far and wide, I have also made it a point of lending an ear to those who were oppressed. I have more especially interrogated those whose long residence in the country, and whose independence rendered them as impartial as they were enlightened. They all deplored M. Mimault's blindness, and complained that so eminent a man, invested with so much apparent respect by the government, should in reality possess so little credit. They were unanimous in expressing their wish that M. de Lesseps should quit Alexandria in order to resume his functions at Cairo. Although he possessed neither the European experience nor the years of M. Mimault, yet he knew the country well, so that the tricks practised upon his superior could have had no success with him. M. de Lesseps afterwards proved

how well these opinions were founded: after the departure of M. Mimault, he acted pro-tempore as Consul-General, and his expeditious way of transacting business, the success which attended his claims, proved sufficiently that French influence, under his administration, was not manifested by absurd schemes or vain protestations.

My sojourn at Cairo could hardly be very agreeable; my opinions upon Egypt and its ruler were well known, for I had made them public shortly before my arrival in that country. All that I now saw only tended to confirm them, and I should have been ashamed not to have told M. Mimault what I believed to be the truth. Thus I could hardly please those who surrounded the Consul, as they did not participate in my sentiments, while the policy of the latter forbade his showing me any marked favour. For myself I cared very little for titles or decorations granted by an ignorant Turk. I observed that the schools and institutions founded in Egypt, amidst the applause of Europe, had produced no results; it was in the meanest quarters that one had to seek the scholars who had distinguished themselves when receiving their education with so much care and *éclat* in France. It appeared to me very singular to hear men gravely apply the title of Highness to some of the most miserable Pachas, when they would scarcely have condescended to say, "Your Majesty" to the King of the French, or "your Excellency" to his Ministers. Indeed, I conceived great want of respect was shown to a French Marshal travelling in Egypt, when they appointed to receive him an old mili-

tary man notorious from his apostacy, for his cruelty towards poor defenceless Greeks, and who has since added to these titles of glory, the ignominious defeat at Beyrout.

All this did not prevent my seeing what I wanted, nor M. Mimault from presenting me to the Pacha. He requested an audience, and one evening we repaired to his presence; Boghos and his nephew, Nubar, were to act as interpreters. Whilst proceeding to the palace, the Consul acquainted me with the nature of the ceremony, and it would have been rude on my part had I then made any comments. It struck me that so humble an agent as myself was not qualified to disapprove of that which satisfied M. Mimault. I was not a little surprised to learn, that His Highness abstained from offering the pipe to Consuls-General, and that he only bestowed that favour upon Vice-Admirals because they were not residents. M. Mimault added that this rule had been established under M. Drovetti, his predecessor. I crave pardon for dwelling upon a fact which may appear unimportant, but we must not forget that the degree of respect intended to be shown to a person, is manifested by the Turks in the manner of presenting the pipe and coffee. Not offering these, is a marked proof of contempt which the meanest of our Dragomans would not submit to; and if M. Mimault yielded thereto, it was because it had been authorised by an intrigue of M. Drovetti's.

This latter gentleman, after having exercised consular functions in Egypt, became the victim of political changes in France. Dismissed without any

pretext he entered the service of the Pacha, and thus forfeited the right of smoking in his presence. When he was afterwards re-instated as Consul, he cared little to see his colleagues enjoy a privilege he no longer retained. He was at that period almost the only important agent of the European powers in Egypt, and the others concealed under an empty title, their dependence on the Pacha, to whom at this very day the greater part of the consular body may be said really to belong. It was not difficult therefore to withhold the pipe, without fear of complaints, and Ibrahim Pacha readily imitated this encroachment of his father; others very probably have followed their example. The consequence is, that by their official reception, which is almost of daily occurrence, foreign agents pass in the eyes of the people for mere *protégés* of the Pacha, and, in rank and consideration, differ very little from those of his European servants to whom he is pleased to give the title of Bey. They are thus liable to be treated with less respect than would be shown towards the meanest *capidji-bachi* of the Sultan. This opinion is not belied by a ceremony to which the newly appointed Consuls submit on their arrival, on the assurance that it is intended as a mark of honour; the Pacha presents them at their first audience with a pelisse, so that they actually appear to be invested in their office by him.

When we arrived, Mehemet Ali was in a large apartment playing at chess; and, as soon as M. Mimault was announced, he gave orders that he should be introduced. Young Nubar acted as interpreter during the exchange of the usual com-

pliments; but he withdrew as soon as his uncle Boghos made his appearance. This individual remained standing before his master, in an attitude of respectful familiarity. The Pacha had lived too long amidst pomp not to have acquired that air of confiding simplicity, that unaffected ease of manners which never fails to attract admiration. The glance of his eye is penetrating, and his conversation shows that he possesses, in the highest degree, the tact and good sense which distinguish Asiatics. I further observed that he never failed to remember, when addressing Europeans, that pompous phrases produce a great effect when they proceed from the mouth of a Turk.

Thus he paraded his intention of founding a school at Cairo for various arts and trades; I cannot conceive who gave him this idea, but the utility of such institutions in France had been a short time previously the subject of discussion, and I drew his attention to the obstacles they would meet with in Egypt. He appeared to be dissatisfied with my observations, and would I believe have been more pleased had I testified greater admiration for his genius. He did not fail to praise the excellence of his government, and especially the resolution which he had taken, not to encourage those denunciations by which wealthy individuals are pointed out as fit objects for plunder. I might have observed to his Highness that, as none of his subjects would be allowed to leave Egypt and carry off their riches, those means were superfluous, when so many others would enable him to arrive at the same results. Then he spoke of Bagdad

and the shores of the Euphrates, as of a country which, from motives of economy, it did not suit him to seize upon; that remark however did not prevent his making the attempt in the succeeding year. At last the conversation turning upon the approaching expedition of Colonel Chesney, the Pacha exhibited that feeling of opposition and distrust which ignorance renders so natural to Mahometans.

Upon the whole, I was well satisfied with this audience; for although I had found in the Pacha more talent and knowledge than the generality of his countrymen possess, it did not strike me that he surpassed them in dissimulation. With regard to our reception and its forms, it was so contrived that the inquisitive observers who were at the other extremity of the apartment should not entertain too high an opinion of us. Therefore, independently of the absence of the pipe, care was taken that coffee should not be presented to M. Mimault until some time after Mehemet Ali had been served. Squatted upon his divan, the Pacha sometimes raised his turban to scratch his head, then he extended his legs to play with his slippers, placed on the floor before him; finally, he took off and put on again his pelisse several times, and, as soon as we had risen, he commenced walking about as if to refresh himself after the irksomeness caused by our presence.

These trifling acts, puerile in themselves, are however very significant with Mahometans, and the Pacha would not dare to indulge them before persons for whom he entertained any respect. Everything indeed seemed to encourage his endea-

vours to encroach upon the European officials. When we were about to enter the audience chamber, I perceived the Consuls-General of two great powers mingling in the crowd assembled in the hall, neither of whom had any intention of then paying his respects to the Pacha. One of them, a man of merit, who had just arrived, even wore one of those enormous red caps which distinguish government officers. These gentlemen were doubtless not aware that by so doing they were degrading themselves ; and such of their colleagues as were perfectly acquainted with the customs of the country, took good care not to set them right. The Consuls ought in general to have conducted themselves with more reserve; and one of their body should not have so far forgotten himself as to assume the dress of the Pacha's followers, and appear to be one of them, (of which fact I was a witness), in order that he might propitiate Mehemet Ali with a view to some commercial speculation.

Shortly after this visit, we received the important news that Ibrahim Pacha was about to return to Cairo after having conquered Syria. Grand preparations were made to receive him; the shops were decorated, and every one did his utmost to invent devices and inscriptions suitable for the occasion. Permission was granted for the opening of public-houses; and although, from motives of morality, the *almé* dancing girls had been expelled from the town, boys were allowed to dance in the streets. An Armenian Catholic profited by this opportunity to give a ball, and was kind enough to invite me. All the European society at Cairo was assembled, and the elegance of our large towns

was blended there with that graceful effeminacy which is only to be found in the East. A private room had been set apart for the Egyptian ladies; and all would have been very delightful, if Soliman Pacha, on the plea of civilisation, had not unexpectedly brought a crowd of men whom he presented as his officers. Heaven knows what those poor Turks must have thought, with their hands newly incased in gloves, and who now for the first time beheld ladies, represented to be modest women, dancing with men! The master of the house no doubt knew that he must put up with this intrusion. He had neither invited them nor their commander; but a Pacha, although a Frenchman,* does not stand upon ceremony with a *raya*. Whilst the Armenian was apologising on the eve of his party at M. Mimault's, for not having invited his Excellency, he was interrupted by Soliman Pacha saying to him:—"Oh, indeed, I require no invitation; I had already resolved to present myself with my officers." With the exception of the restraint, which the presence of these intruders imposed upon the ladies, who were aware of their prejudices, the party went off in a very satisfactory manner.

The day before his entry into Cairo, Ibrahim Pacha established his quarters at about three miles from the town, at the Choubra Gardens, where a number of persons went to compliment him just before the preparations for his reception were being completed. A discharge of artillery announced, on the following day, the hour of the solemnity; the

* Soliman Pacha is a native of France.

guns firing as soon as the conqueror left Choubra in order to visit his father, who was waiting for him in the citadel. I accompanied M. Mimault to see the procession, and passing between two lines of soldiery on our way to the audience hall, we arrived there before the crowd.

Although there were a great many persons assembled, I was enabled to approach near enough to see Mehemet Ali seated on the corner of the divan, having on his right the three children of Ibrahim clad in their richest dresses. He was dressed with taste; his expressive countenance was animated by pleasure, but he refrained from indulging in any of those familiarities which he had so freely exhibited before us. Ibrahim was half seated upon the divan at a respectful distance, taking coffee; but neither he nor his father smoked. The latter, I heard, had half risen to greet his son on his entrance. In other respects, the ceremony of his reception was neither impressive nor affectionate, although Ibrahim had been absent for several years; the children also appeared to be unmoved, and it seemed to me that their father took not the least notice of them. There was no private conference after the public audience, and M. Mimault and I had scarcely reached the street, when the escort appointed to conduct the victor to his palace re-commenced its march. At first came some of the regular cavalry, then the Beys in their rich scarlet uniforms. Next succeeded Ibrahim followed by persons of high station; although he was dressed with simplicity, it was evidently not through humility or modesty; for, at his right, walked a man upon whose head he rested his hand,

indicating thereby the fearful power he claimed to exercise over life and death. A detachment of cavalry closed the march.

A few days afterwards, M. Mimault permitted me to accompany him, when he went to pay his respects to Ibrahim. We were conducted into the audience hall, where three or four persons awaited his arrival; he had been indisposed, and remained longer than usual in the interior apartment. Soliman Pacha appeared to do the honours of the house, and as we admired the vast proportions of the hall, he expressed his desire to see the battles of Koniéh and of Kutayah represented there by the pencil of some great master. Ibrahim may congratulate himself for not having had so much vanity. After a while, he appeared, and we advanced towards the sofa upon which he had seated himself. As a good Mahometan, he took care to place the true believers on one side, and the infidels on the other. Soliman Pacha, Mouctad Bey, and a third personage half seated themselves upon the divan, and chairs were brought for us. I could not understand why the French Pacha occupied the last place, that is, the farthest from Ibrahim; perhaps the title of Pacha was only bestowed on him to give him consequence in the eyes of Europeans, for among the Turks, the laws of precedence are never violated. Although Ibrahim Pacha did not offer us the pipe, he avoided any other appearance of slight towards us; in other respects we had no reason to be pleased with him. He spoke of his campaigns and the fatigue he had undergone, and mentioned the displeasure which the luxurious habits of Mr.

Farren, the British Consul at Damascus, had caused him.

"With the exception of the sovereigns of Europe," (and, to express sovereigns, he made use of the contemptuous term *kral* in place of *padicha*), "I have seen almost all the most distinguished personages, but have never observed so much luxury as in the house of that impertinent Consul. Look at Piccioti," (a Jew and a *raya*), "he is indeed a quiet, decent man. You French too have at Beyrout an odd sort of a Consul. He had some pieces of artillery in his house, and he would not let me have them; but I ordered Mouctad Bey to carry them off."

This was true enough I believe. Our Consul had, it seems, some cannon in his possession which had been left behind by a vessel; his residence was forcibly entered, and the cannon carried off, just indeed as we heard the occurrence described by Ibrahim, in the presence of M. Mimault, who had in vain protested against it. As the conversation happened to turn upon Algiers, Soliman Pacha, by way of proving himself a good Mahometan, said that the French would make little of their conquest; whilst Ibrahim denounced the Dey who had allowed it to be taken as a cowardly rascal.

"He passed through Egypt," observed Ibrahim, "but I declined receiving him."

The fact is, that the unfortunate Dey was proceeding on a pilgrimage to Mecca, where he was said to have been poisoned, like many others, for the sake of his riches. It may be easily conceived that we quitted this mighty conqueror with no feeling of

satisfaction; M. Mimault indeed could scarcely conceal his disgust. For my part, with the experience I already had of the Turkish character, I was but little astonished at what I had heard. I confess that on our return, I was gratified at no longer hearing Mehemet Ali and his son so extravagantly lauded for their high character and noble sentiments. However, I must admit that Ibrahim Pacha rose in my esteem from this interview; his demeanour was at least simple and natural; he imagined himself verily to be one of the most potent sovereigns and greatest warriors of the universe; and what is more, he said so. He thought, that if he was not Napoleon's equal, he was little less; and made no mystery of it. In a word, he showed some frankness of character, a quality rare indeed amongst Asiatics, and for which he is certainly not indebted to paternal example. He exhibited this one day in a very singular manner. A journalist had been engaged to come from Paris to advocate the interests of Egypt; this gentleman, fancying probably that government was carried on at Cairo in the same manner as at Paris, felt anxious to become acquainted with the views of the cabinet, and for this purpose applied to Ibrahim Pacha, who stood aghast and made him no reply.

"See now," said the Prince some time afterwards, "see how we are imposed upon, when we send commissions to be executed; I told them I required a journalist to eulogise me, and the man inquires of me what he is to write about! Zounds, if I could only tell him, why I'd write it myself and dispense with his services."

Before concluding this chapter, I should mention a generally accredited rumour relative to the birth of Ibrahim Pacha, which was communicated to me by a well informed Frenchman, then in Egypt. It is well known that Mehemet Ali was at Cairo with his troops in a state of mutiny, when he determined upon attacking the British troops at the period of their landing in Egypt. From a window of his palace he exhibited to his unruly soldiery a piece of gold.

"Oh! oh!" cried he, "you want money do you? This is all I possess; go and seek for more elsewhere, whilst you allow the infidels to land unmolested in Egypt, and seize upon your women. I will no longer protect you, dogs—kafirs!"

His eloquence was irresistible; the troops implored him to resume the command; he routed the English, and returned to Cairo with a considerable number of prisoners. Ibrahim, who was at that time a young man of eighteen, claimed the prisoners, desiring them to be given up to him for his amusement. He ordered them to be drawn out in line in the square called Uzbekié; then mounting his horse, he exercised himself in throwing the djereed at his unresisting victims. Putting his horse at full gallop, he was delighted whenever he laid low one of these poor fellows with his weapon. M. Drovetti, who was then French Consul at Cairo, could not witness such a scene without deep emotion, and reproached Ibrahim for his inhumanity. His first impulse was creditable to him, and he admitted that he was to blame. But his flatterers having remonstrated, telling him that he was a Prince, and had a right to amuse himself as he

thought fit; that these prisoners were his property, and that it ill became an unbeliever to proffer his unasked advice; he thereupon resumed his savage amusement, carrying it to greater excess than he had done before. M. Drovetti again remonstrated. But this time Ibrahim received him very ungraciously, making use of the insulting expression of *sikimé*. It would have been a waste of words to complain to the Pacha himself of what he would be sure to consider a youthful frolic; besides the French Consul could not interfere too openly on behalf of English subjects, whilst France was at war with their nation. But M. Drovetti was not one of those men who allow themselves to be insulted with impunity; he knew the country too well not to find means of revenging this affront. He affirmed, over and over again, with untiring perseverance, that Ibrahim Pacha was merely an adopted son of Mehemet Ali. An assertion which has gained ground in Europe; and what is of more importance to that Prince, is credited by many Mahometans. This rumour has been, and will long be, a serious obstacle to his authority.

CHAPTER II.

EGYPT.

Departure from Cairo—Voyage on the Nile—Thebes—Kosseir —The Aïtas, or Albanian soldiers.

THE instructions which I was expecting to receive from Constantinople reached me about the middle of the month of February, 1835, and I found it necessary to prepare for my departure for India. Admiral Roussin had judged it expedient not to require a new title for me from the Porte, but to confer upon me that of Vice-Consul, whilst he provided me with a *berat* or *exequatur*, as Consul at Bassora. Unquestionably the Minister for Foreign Affairs ought to have informed the embassy of the object of my mission, and should also have communicated the steps which had been taken in order to insure the success that it was anticipated would arise from it. This had not been done; and when I deemed it requisite to write an explanatory letter to the Ambassador myself, I found that it was too late, as my speedy arrival had already been officially announced at Bagdad and Bassora. Thus a temporary mission was converted into a Consular establishment, quite as onerous as it was useless. Although very much put out by this

circumstance, I was obliged to submit, and proceeded to make the necessary arrangements. It would hardly be practicable for me to quit the Red Sea until the favourable monsoon should set in, which would only occur in three or four months; therefore, instead of embarking at Suez, I resolved to go up the Nile, visit Thebes, and get on board the first vessel I should meet with at Kosseir. Whilst looking out for one of the boats called *ganja*, used for such expeditions, I had plenty of time to inspect the curiosities that surround Cairo, and which have been described by so many travellers. I then bade farewell to that celebrated city, which I was much rejoiced to have seen, although I quitted it without regret. The administration of public business is as badly conducted there as in any other Mahometan town, and is rendered contemptible by odious trickery.

If the monuments of antiquity to be seen along the shores of the Nile excite our admiration, it may also be said that nothing can equal the monotony of a voyage in a small boat, when contrary winds oblige the boatmen to row against the stream. It took me fifteen tedious days to reach Thebes, including the stoppages required either to give the sailors rest, or to enable me to visit remarkable objects pointed out by those who had preceded me. I believe I rendered an essential service to the *savans* during this trip. Amongst the bold conceptions of Mehemet Ali, the manufactures he established are conspicuous. In order to obtain operatives, he used to give chase to the inhabitants; and when he had seized upon a sufficient number he clapped them in a building adapted for weaving cotton. The raw article

cost him nothing, he paid no wages, fed the workmen scantily, and, as he himself fixed the price of his calico, and forced his subjects to purchase it, he had, as may be conceived, every chance of reaping a handsome profit. One of these philanthropic establishments stands near the temple of Dendera, which I visited. I noticed a great heap of stones which had been detached from the temple, and that a large breech had been made in the southern wall. I made inquiries as to the motive of this demolition, which I attributed to the fanaticism of some obscure Governor; but I soon learned that it was done by his Highness's orders. As lime was required in the construction of his schools and manufactures, nothing could be more convenient than to take the stones of the temple and burn them for this purpose. I took care to communicate this act of vandalism to M. Mimault, and for once I was certain he did not approve of the conduct of this modern Pharaoh. As an enlightened protector of the arts, he must have felt indignant indeed; for, he remembered this circumstance a long time afterwards, when some visionary proposed to demolish the Pyramids. Without his timely intercession, Dendera would long since have been converted into lime, and the base of the Pyramids gnawed by a parcel of pygmies. The Pacha, who cares little for ancient monuments, would have authorised anything, adopting as he does the most extravagant and contradictory projects, which it is in his power to abandon on the morrow. He merely affects to take an interest in antiquities in order to please Europeans, laughing in his sleeve at their whimsicalities.

This observation, which I was able to communicate most seasonably, is certainly the most important and useful one I made during my voyage on the Nile. I shall however cite a few others. About three or four miles from Cairo, some regular soldiers discharged their fire-arms at my boat. They had orders to proceed to some post, and as they preferred, no doubt, being carried there to marching, they had adopted this expedient, very frequently used, to induce us to take them on board. They did not succeed however, for we had time to row further off before they could re-load their muskets. This is a sample of the state of discipline of the Egyptian army. Two days afterwards, we found ourselves in the midst of the Pacha's flotilla, which was on its way to put down a revolt that had broken out amongst his faithful subjects. For some months past it had been possible to go about six miles out of Cairo, that is to say as far as the Pyramids, without running a great risk of being robbed; probably the robbers had now withdrawn themselves a little further off. It is requisite, on the Nile, to keep a sharp look out in order to avoid being attacked by the Arabs, and the Pacha himself takes great delight in narrating anecdotes of their prowess and skill. At the little town of Manfalout I met with two Englishmen returning from India: Major Johnstone, who is since dead, and his brother. We went together to visit an Italian missionary, shut up in his convent, who only allowed the door to be opened after using great precautions. We were very much surprised to find his reverence dressed in a military uniform, and armed with a huge pair of pistols. This

watchfulness on his part was indeed quite necessary. A few days before, he had been forced to mount guard because the Arabs had entered the town and pillaged the houses. The Governor was afraid to offer resistance, and on the previous night they had besieged the convent. We departed, as may be presumed, very little edified with the admirable order Mehemet Ali had established in his dominions. At Khenneh, I observed that the son of my landlord, of whom I shall speak hereafter, had, like most children of his own age, three teeth extracted from his upper jaw. This was done, as I was told, to avoid liability to military service; such was the usage at Khenneh; elsewhere the fashion differed: some preferred to put out an eye, cut off a finger, or mutilate themselves in various ways.

I was obliged to put off visiting the temple of Carnac for another day, as there were some horsemen then concealed amongst the ruins. These horsemen were on the recruiting service, and this is their mode of acting:—they arrive unawares, carefully concealing their march, and, during the night, they squat down near a village, expecting that at day-break the inhabitants will proceed to their daily labour; they then pounce upon all those they can come up with. When their prisoners are handcuffed and deposited in a place of safety, those who are able to bribe their keepers are let loose, and the others are sent off to Cairo. A good many boats passed me loaded with these poor fellows. I have seen some of them enter the walls of the metropolis loaded with chains like slaves, preparatory to their being sent to fight in Greece and Syria; I have

seen children who have mutilated themselves; I have also seen abandoned villages, and lands laid waste for want of labourers; and I called to mind the words of our senior countryman in Egypt, the venerable Doctor Dussap: "The play which is acting in Egypt is a most ridiculous farce upon the first floor, but a deplorable tragedy upon the ground floor."

Weariness often drove me from my boat; and armed with my fowling piece, I walked a good part of the way. As I am but a sorry sportsman, I did not destroy much game; but I was surprized to find such immense quantities of geese, wild ducks and aquatic birds of all descriptions, which literally covered the Nile. I amused myself also by shooting, uselessly I confess, at the crocodiles. While on the subject of this amphibious animal, I will relate the popular opinion entertained, not only on the banks of the Nile, but in India also with regard to the alligator. Every one who has met with them has observed that these animals are very keen sighted; they perceive a boat at a very great distance, and it seldom happens that any one can get within musket-shot of them. It is said that they never attack animals or men who happen to be on the same side of the river with themselves: lying along the banks, they watch the opposite shore, then creep slowly into the water, swim towards their prey, and having struck it down with a blow of their tail, they drag it to the bottom of the river. I am not prone to condemn what are termed popular prejudices without examination; and this one appears to be pretty well founded

on truth. While in India, I happened several times to be on the banks of a river, and close to alligators, who always fled on perceiving me, instead of advancing with open mouths, as some delight to represent them in their pictures.

One day some fishermen on the coast of Malabar having caught one in their nets, I purchased it of them. He was taken to my residence, where I had him firmly secured to a pillar. I then observed that he could see better at a distance than near. When he fancied he was about to be attacked, he promptly raised his head and tail, and displayed his fearful row of teeth; his body also assumed a circular form, far different from that which animals usually assume when on the point of dashing upon their enemy. This mode of attack, by striking with the tail, is very common with the tribe of *Sauria*. I had at Bassora an enormous lizard (*Gecko*), whose shoulders and tail were armed with hard and sharp points. If I irritated him with a stick, he dealt blows with his tail sufficiently strong to leave the print of its points, and even to tear off pieces of the wood. This *Gecko* was about a foot and a half long from the snout to the extremity of the tail: he was of a brown colour, and remarkable for having only one tooth in the middle of the upper jaw. I presented him to the Asiatic Society of Calcutta. My alligator, which measured six feet in length, and belonged to the common species, I afterwards caused to be killed.

I made some stay at Thebes, or properly speaking at Luxsor, in that ancient temple which the Pacha in his munificence has presented to our country. Our sailors took up their quarters there,

when they were sent to fetch the celebrated obelisk which now figures in one of our public places. This granite gem, which very much resembles the high chimney of a furnace, will long remain a monument of our bad taste. The first thing which struck me was a similar obelisk, and fellow to that above alluded to; the *liberal* Pacha had been kind enough to present this to the town of Marseilles. The municipal authorities of that town, consisting no doubt of persons who preferred cotton to stone, refused to throw a few millions into the coffers of his Highness, in exchange for this wonder, so that it is still in its old place. The village of Luxsor was, so to speak, lost amongst fragments of columns, antique walls, statues and bassi-relievi. I most humbly confess, that if these immense fragments excited my astonishment to the highest degree, they gave me but little admiration for the Egyptians.

Their hieroglyphics, which some learned men pride themselves upon being alone able to comprehend, appeared to me to be very inelegant; screech-owls, the bull Apis, lizards and beetles struck me as being very gloomy animals and wretchedly represented. In drawing human figures they would not have succeeded better; the heads sculptured in profile had the eye represented in full front. Neither do I think processions of captives, with their hands cut off, and slaves in chains, interesting or agreeable sights. Even the temples, notwithstanding their magnificence and the labour they cost, did not please me, because I was ignorant of the object, motives, and details of constructions so prodigious. How much greater had been my feelings of admiration on beholding

the "*Maison-carrée*" of Nismes; the ruins of Pompeii; and the monuments of antiquity I had seen scattered over so many parts of Italy, Greece and Asia Minor. With what rapture, after having contemplated that incongruous heap of Sphinxes, Isises, Cynocephali, and monsters of every description, did I recall to mind the beautiful antique statues of Florence, Rome, and Paris!

The fact is, we admire only that which we easily comprehend—that which strikes at once both the mind and the senses. A beautiful equation, a steam-engine, a luminous theory of certain phenomena, impart no pleasure, although we may be indebted for them to intellects quite as powerful as those of a Phidias or a Praxiteles. It is thus with the Egyptian monuments: one naturally asks why those enormous blocks, of which the Pyramids are composed, were piled up; by what extraordinary efforts, by what mechanism they were transported to their present site, and no satisfactory reply is obtained. Those immense temples, so overcharged with inscriptions and emblems; with their divisions into apartments, galleries and avenues, of what use were they? Where did the people assemble? Where did the priest and the sacrificers stand? No one can tell. Go into the caverns where the mummies are laid out; crawl along until you are enabled to gaze around you, regardless of the odour of your torches, or of the danger of setting fire to the bitumen scattered on all sides. What knowledge have you then gained by this toilsome excursion? That corpses may be preserved for a long time, and that all is

vanity in this world! The modest churchyard of your native hamlet would have taught you all that is worth knowing in this.

But there are besides more distinguished tombs, and royal sepulchres of incredible magnificence, which I have also visited. I have been, like many others, at Medinet Abou; and there I experienced no feeling but wonder. Perhaps the frescoes which adorn the walls of all the chambers are fresher than those of Herculaneum, but they are far from being so correct. Moreover, I comprehended little of what I saw, consequently my interest was not much excited. It fell to my lot to discover some monuments which had not yet been described, as well as some ill-preserved inscriptions. I eagerly sought to discover the origin of the one, the meaning of the others; but, had I had no means of throwing light upon the subject, I should, like the Turkish shepherd or the Egyptian *fellah*, have disdained inscriptions and monuments. I again repeat, these celebrated remains of antiquity excited only my profound astonishment; not being sufficiently learned to appreciate them, I had not the bad taste to admire them.

I will not carry my humility so far as to allow it to be supposed that I visited these places quite unprepared. On the contrary, before my departure I had derived much information from M. Mimault's library; and I found at Thebes, in M. Fresnel, a master whose lessons and assistance never failed me. I had met him at Cairo, and fell in with him again in his hermitage at Medinet Abou. Brother of the

celebrated physician of that name, M. Fresnel had given himself up entirely to science. After having devoted his time and fortune to studies similar to those of his brother, he applied himself to the oriental languages, and was soon esteemed as one of the most skilled, amongst the Europeans, in Arabic literature. He had spent several years amongst the ruins of Thebes, housed in an ancient tomb, which he had converted into a residence far from disagreeable, and lived amongst his books, which he only forsook to follow up the incomplete labours of Champollion. The hints which he was kind enough to give us were precious, and inspired us with some interest for what we were visiting; but I repeat, we knew too little of these things to render our excursions as pleasant as they were toilsome. I was not the only one who entertained this sentiment. Thebes is visited by so many travellers, that one frequently finds society there as numerous as it is agreeable. I met, among others, with two British officers, who a short time previously had been at Cairo, and we undertook together the customary pilgrimage to the most remarkable spots. We were all heartily delighted when that task had been accomplished.

The inhabitants of the villages which surround Thebes reap great benefits from the sojourn of strangers; not only do they profit by the disbursements which are made there, but, by placing their children in attendance on Europeans, exempt them from serving as recruits. They derive moreover still greater advantages; if the harvest has been a bad one, or if their taxes are heavier than they can afford to pay, they frequently find in

their guests powerful intercessors in supporting their representations. The Pacha is in this respect the more indulgent, because whenever he chooses to dispense a village from contributing a part, or even the whole of its taxes, he at once causes the deficit to be made up by the neighbouring ones. Consequently, it seldom happens that he refuses, when thus solicited, to grant an alleviation by which he is no loser. It even furnishes him with an agreeable pretext for laughing at the simplicity and the fine sentiments of Europeans.

The caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, starts from Khenneh across the desert; I had therefore been advised to return to that town in order to join it; nevertheless, having been enabled to hire camels at Luxsor, I resolved to go on direct to Kosseir. I departed one morning followed by the whole population who asked for presents, and receiving none overwhelmed me with insults. They had, it appears, discovered by worrying some of our countrymen, that obstinacy is a great element of success; for, during the distance of three miles, I heard them bellow, *Bakshis! Bakshis!* which, however, was lost upon me; I was too much accustomed to such clamour to heed them. A journey across the Desert is sadly monotonous; but then one is not always obliged to be seated, and if it is more fatiguing than a voyage up the Nile, it is, on the whole, less irksome. I cannot bear the motions of a camel, and as it will not do to use a horse, in consequence of the quantity of water he requires, I hired one of those asses so celebrated for their swiftness and

docility. By this means I arrived commodiously enough, after a journey of five days, which I almost constantly employed in examining whether the digging of a canal between the Nile and the sea, then much talked of, was practicable. I did not observe any very great natural difficulties, as the land is always flat, and no sooner do you quit the alluvium of the Nile, than you meet with freestone; then, on approaching Kosseir, you follow the valleys which divide the calcareous mountains that border the Red Sea. I observed upon the layer of a mountain which I could not reach, large fossil *pectenites*.

It would appear therefore at first sight, that a canal might easily be dug. But when the state of the country is taken into consideration; the absence of population; the want of implements, of water, and of the productions most indispensable to man, which, over a space of nearly one hundred and fifty miles, distinguishes this barren soil; the difficulty of such an operation may easily be understood. Taking, as a basis for calculation, the time expended, and the number of men employed in cleansing the bed of the Nile, I judged that the entire population of Egypt would not suffice for such an undertaking. Another obstacle, which I believe has not been calculated upon, is the filling up of the canal by sand. I have never beheld any of those great storms in the Desert, described by romancers which raise up such enormous clouds of sand that they bury both men and beasts; but in a very sandy tract we were overtaken, at about half way to Kosseir, by a violent south wind. The sand blew in our faces, and inconvenienced us more than

can be imagined; it penetrated into our clothes, and its friction destroying the seams of our dresses, made rents which were soon enlarged by the wind. I was constrained to stop in order to put on other clothes; for mine, after a march of four or five hours, were completely tattered. I endeavoured to ascertain what quantity of sand was thus carried along; causing a towel to be held perpendicularly, I found that a layer of four lines accumulated every minute on the side exposed to the wind.

In this manner the small hills, observable in the Desert, are formed behind all natural obstacles. They change their positions according to the direction of the wind; and it is quite evident therefore if they were driven into the cavity of a canal, that they would remain there and fill it up by continual accumulation. The railway projected between Cairo and Suez would not be subject to this inconvenience, although its execution would no doubt be difficult, especially as the outlay would far exceed the profits which might be calculated upon. What renders such undertakings real scourges in these countries is the government, which is thus furnished with pretexts for committing acts of violence and rapine, not anticipated by the advisers of such measures. We only found good water, midway of our journey, in a defile of the mountains; the other springs were brackish.

The only Bedouin tents we observed were in the environs of Kosseir, and the only living creatures visible were vultures and crows, devouring the carcases of animals who had died on the road. The dif-

ferent resting places were marked by skeletons, and they served as *rendezvous* for robbers. It often happened that camels were carried off at night, and that the very man who had taken them offered his services to procure their restoration; consequently some person attached to the caravan always kept watch. What surprised me very much was our falling in from time to time with coveys of partridges, of a very beautiful species, upon those barren mountains where it seemed hardly possible for them to find nourishment. One day I observed upon the sand, and close behind a small tree under whose shade I had sought repose, the print of an enormous lion's paw. This caused me some alarm, until my travelling companions, whom I had preceded, rejoined me, and henceforward I resolved to be more prudent in my excursions.

Kosseir is a wretched Arabian town, composed of mud-houses, and possessing a species of caravanserai which is called the Castle, and a few gardens without the walls, where some stunted date and plantain trees vegetate with difficulty. The town was filled with pilgrims on their way to Mecca; and in the harbour lay some Arabian vessels, traders on the Red Sea. Its Governor was then making his circuit; and the country was provisionally under the authority of a Candiot, one of his slaves, on whom he had conferred full power to act. I visited the Castle, defended by a few bad pieces of cannon, and in the middle of the court yard perceived a mortar bearing the mark of the French Republic. We indeed occupied this place during the expedition into Egypt; an English force afterwards came from India, and effected a land-

ing. The two nations which had engaged in these undertakings, thought that the recollection of their deeds was ingrafted in the memory of the people; the one believed that it was cherished for its attempts at civilisation, the other that it was blessed for having delivered the country from a foreign yoke. Alas! how they deceived themselves. The hostile soldiers were looked upon as infidels of two distinct tribes, then at war with each other, who both had defiled the sacred soil of Egypt, and both were regarded as equally detestable by true believers. The Turks who guarded the fortress knew nothing of the origin of this mortar, the only vestige of our domination. They pretended that they had taken it from the Kafirs, but did not trouble their heads whether these Kafirs were French or English. Those whom I interrogated were however not quite so ignorant as the Arabs, from whom it would have been dangerous to have formed the garrison of so isolated a town. They belonged to the corps of Aïtas and Arnaouts; in a word, to that aristocratic class upon which the power of Mehemet Ali is founded, as well as that of all other Pachas.

The system of the Egyptian government is by no means an impenetrable mystery. Most authors have however neglected to explain how it comes that these men whom I have just named, these irregular soldiers whose presence is everywhere the signal of disorder, should be the basis of the Pacha's power. It is because the authority of the latter is of an exactly similar nature to that of the Deys of Barbary, and other provinces where the inhabitants are not of Turkish origin. When

Mehemet Ali first distinguished himself in Egypt, he was in the same position as the chiefs of those irregular troops whom he now holds in his pay. European tactics and discipline had not then been introduced, so that with audacity and ability any one of these prætorians could aspire to supreme power, and force the Porte to recognise him. The establishment of regular troops having afforded the means of checking the irregular ones, government has acquired more stability without changing its original character. It happens accordingly that in Turkey whenever a man has been unfortunate; when he has committed robbery or murder; when he is justly or unjustly persecuted by government; or more especially when he has participated in the exercise of authority, and does not find sufficient protection in his own country, he absconds and seeks employment elsewhere. His first step is to purchase arms; then to go where he is certain of meeting with some of his countrymen. If it happens that one of them is the Governor of a province, he addresses himself to him. If he be related by blood or is on terms of friendship with the Governor, his transformation is instantaneous; he is appointed to some lucrative post, and raised sometimes to the most important offices. If, on the contrary, he possess no claims to entitle him to notice, he enrols himself amongst the numerous servants of the chief or amongst the irregular troops. Such are the elements of which the power of all the Pachas is composed.

In the provinces nearest to Constantinople, this system has been a little modified by the presence of regular troops, who serve to keep the peace as well

as to wage war, and render it unnecessary for the chief of the country to have such a host of servants; but there is not one able to govern, without being surrounded by a number of followers ready to defend him. It must not be supposed that it is sufficient to have a firman of appointment in order to assume the government of a province, or to enforce authority wherever office has been attained. The attendants who surround a chief are not kept for the sake of ostentation, but from sheer necessity; it is requisite to be prepared against surprise. If the Pacha of Egypt were not habitually surrounded, like his compeers, by faithful men interested in his welfare, some powerful Sheikh or a Capidji-bachi would soon assassinate him; and were he possessed of much wealth, the deed would insure the thanks of the Porte. For this reason, as soon as a Turk presents himself in Egypt, he is the better received the more he is compromised in his own country. If he comes from the Cavalle, or have any conection with Mehemet Ali's family, it frequently happens that he is considered in the light of a relative, receives perhaps the title of Bey, and is raised to the highest rank and fortune. It is amongst such men that the Pacha chooses the chiefs and officers of his regular troops, as well as his principal officials. It is they who govern—who drain the resources of Egypt and the Egyptians. This system renders the idea, formerly attributed to the Pacha, of reconstructing the nationality of Egypt somewhat ridiculous.

It is by means of the irregular troops that Mehemet Ali has acquired such popularity among the

Turks, because it is they who seize upon that portion of the produce of this rich soil which has escaped his cupidity. This explains too how it happens that *rayahs* and infidels attain a power and rank which does not fall to their lot in other parts of the Empire. Christiáns undoubtedly form part of the irregular troops, and they fight and plunder like their comrades; no where else could such great authority be bestowed on them over a Mussulman population, not previously reduced to a state of submission, similar to that of the *fellahs* of Egypt. In support of this assertion, I will make an observation, the accuracy of which any one can test. If a robbery be committed, or a complaint lódged against any offender, mark how severe and prompt the reparation is whenever the wrong-doer is an Arab; whereas, if he be an Aïta, one of those irregular soldiers whom Europeans style Albanians, no redress will ever be obtained. The alarm and disorder therefore which these troops occasion in every town they enter is well known.

A short time before my arrival, Turki Bilmez one of their chiefs, had revolted, and detached Arabia from its allegiance to the Pacha. Most European agents, who have but a superficial knowledge of Turkish administration, have insisted upon the necessity of disbanding these troops, but invariably without success. It appeared to them, that troops of such a description were certainly not wanted by a Prince, who has at his command a large regular army, tolerably well disciplined. But Mehemet Ali appreciates too highly the importance of the link which connects

one institution with another to think of snapping it. He knows full well that without his Aïtas, his sway could not be maintained, and he is too prudent to give them cause for discontent. Little matters it to him whether Europeans be insulted, wounded, or even killed; for in such a case the culprit has only to be concealed, or at the worst, he has to afford such illusory reparation, as experience shows the injured parties are usually content to put up with. These very Aïtas have moreover caused him many other and more serious embarrassments, without his being able to rid himself of them. When he bestowed the hand of his daughter upon one of these worthies, did not that model of a son-in-law conduct himself towards Cairo much after the fashion of Cartouche or Mandrin? Torturing some, putting others to death, even tearing open the stomach of a boy to ascertain if he had drunk twopenny worth of milk!

The picture which I have drawn of Egypt is so very gloomy, that I can well afford to do its chief the justice of admitting, that as respects generosity, he differs advantageously from his fellow-countrymen. He does not hoard up his riches, but spends his revenue. The number of his troops was estimated at one hundred thousand men—this is however certainly an exaggeration; his revenue amounted to a hundred million francs; his fleet presented a show of strength; he had established an arsenal, manufactures and schools; all this gave to his administration an unquestionable air of grandeur; but it must also be mentioned, that all these institutions were for selfish purposes, and reduced his subjects to a state of incredible misery. In Europe, it is con-

sidered a question well worthy of examination, to ascertain if taxes, or, as it is termed, a heavy budget, be not an element of prosperity. There this budget, in effect, is again scattered about the country after having been levied in it; but such is not the case altogether in Egypt. If the army be clad, no manufacturer derives any benefit thereby, for the Pacha is the manufacturer. If arms are purchased, the amount of their cost goes to the foreign merchant. The navy is of no earthly use to the country, it being, as in Russia, a mere object of vanity. In a word, the revenue is absorbed by the Pacha himself; by some of his favourites, and more especially by foreign speculators whom he aids in making their fortune. This system deserves no praise. It is however advantageous to a number of persons who might be usefully employed in Egypt, if their talents and their services could be understood and seriously turned to account.

CHAPTER III.

EGYPT.

Kosseir—The Agents of the East India Company—Bad regulations of the English navy—Arabian diversions.

It is at Kosseir that the European traveller first observes the influence of the East India Company. Colonel Campbell, British Consul-General at Cairo, had provided me with letters of introduction for the agents of that company at Khenneh and Kosseir; these were two brothers, profitably engaged in commerce, thanks to the protection which their title afforded them. General Sir John Malcolm, Governor of Bombay, had appointed these men, who were Arabs, and they were considered to be consular agents; it being the practice to submit without murmuring to the liberties which the English are every where in the habit of taking. The Pacha of Egypt was recognized by the British government, which had an accredited Consul-General and his subordinates at his court; and it is difficult to understand how the Governor of a colony could venture to assume an equal authority, and also appoint representatives. But Sir John Malcolm, who was at that time in Egypt, perfectly understood the character of Asiatics; his lofty stature, his great pecuniary resources, the authority vested in him, the men-of-war he could at any time order into the Red

Sea were all calculated to impose upon their minds, and he was thus prompted to act with confidence. He did not respect much either the intellectual qualities or the rights of the Pacha, and treated him with little ceremony.

I do not believe that complaints were ever made on this head, and it is more than probable that they would not have been heeded. Abdullah of Kosseir and his brother Mehemet of Khenneh, constituted therefore the diplomatic corps of Upper Egypt; the former receiving the ships and passengers who came from, or were bound to India, and furnishing travellers with the necessary means of transport. Indeed, they rendered essential, if not very disinterested, or regular services; and their hospitality deserves praise. It was the agent at Khenneh who had informed me that I should find an English ship at Kosseir, and aware of the time it would be detained there, I was enabled to visit Thebes. I had no sooner come in sight of the roads, than I perceived a fine three-master riding at anchor off the port, surrounded by four or five of the heavy *bagloes* of the country. I immediately went to Abdullah, who bore the title of Sheikh, and appeared to be the most important personage in the neighbourhood. My baggage was deposited at his house, and I then hastened on board to settle the terms of my passage.

This ship, though sailing under British colours, was commanded by what is called a *nacoda*, or Asiatic captain. Some of the sailors appeared to be Europeans; and at last I perceived among them a young officer of the East India Company's navy. Every thing was remarkable for elegance, neatness, and

order, and I could not help comparing what I saw with the hideous vessel which brought me from Marseilles to Alexandria. But I little anticipated the dangers which were in store for me. The *nacoda* was the only person with whom I could converse; he was a Persian by birth, and esteemed himself a good sailor. As I could not speak English, it was impossible for me to hold any conversation with the British officer who was on board, and much less with the European sailors who proved to be Portuguese. They were the steersmen, and were called *cigony*. With regard to the sailors denominated *classi*, they were a mixture of Arabs and Mussulmans from India. Every one spoke his own language, but they all understood Hindostanee. It were waste of time to relate all the untruths which it pleased my only interlocutor to entertain me with; in his character of Persian he did not spare them. But I think it necessary, for the information of future travellers, to give some idea of the equipment of this English vessel.

A powerful Indian Prince, the Nizam of Hyderabad, had, from religious motives, ordered two vessels of similar proportions to be constructed, one of which was intended to carry pilgrims gratuitously from India to Mecca, and the other to trade in order to cover the expenses of the former. Both were placed under the superintendance of an English house at Bombay; but the Nizam had imposed upon them the obligation of employing Mahometan masters. This firm, as is customary, had no commercial transactions with the natives, and consequently wrote to a Persian merchant, to send

them two clever *nacodas;* and our Captain, Mehemet Ismaël, was thus selected as one of them. His nautical acquirements were of no very great extent. Born at Bushire, he had when a boy accompanied his uncle, a horse-dealer's servant, to Bombay, where he learned English, and subsequently served as groom and horse-dealer himself. He then accompanied his patron in a pilgrimage to Mecca, and had returned from that journey. He had therefore in all made but three short trips, and could not even bear the motion of the ship without suffering sickness. He was recommended to the British merchants as a very distinguished sailor, and was at once engaged, thanks to the off-hand impudence with which he conversed on naval subjects.

It is worthy of remark, that the maritime regulations of the English, whose navy elicits the envy of all other nations in so high a degree, are very imperfect. They have pilfered some of our celebrated ordinances, borrowed others from the Dutch, and this undigested medley goes by the name of the Maritime Code of Great Britain. While a passenger on board their ships, it has often struck me, on reading their regulations, that the most ordinary cases were not foreseen; that the rules of discipline were not explained; and that it was frequently necessary to add to the text commentaries explaining what was, in certain circumstances, the French or the Dutch practice, thereby leaving, it would seem, to the Master the option of choosing the one or the other. One of the privileges which results from this notable system, is the power given to the owner of appointing whomsoever he may think fit to the command of his ship; if the lives

of the passengers be in danger, so much the worse for them ; and if the ship be lost, why that concerns the underwriters. Nothing therefore prevented Mehemet Ismaël from stepping from the stable to the quarter-deck. True, he was a Persian subject, and the navigation laws oblige British ships to be commanded by British officers, without which they are not allowed to hoist British colours. These regulations are very well for Europe, but they are overlooked in India.

It is very certain that English cruisers will not seize upon vessels provided with British papers; and with regard to those of other nations, there is no fear of their being guilty of the folly, in these latitudes, of meddling with the police of the seas. A scrupulous prudence is recommended to them beyond the Cape of Good Hope. The English alone in those seas assume the right of acting, as if they were the chief Custom House officers, or the grand Inquisitors of the universe. Mehemet Ismaël was called Hajji Ismaël by the devotees, because he had been to Mecca ; Malum Ismaël by the merchants, because Malum signifies navigator ; Mehemet Small by the English, who thus mutilated his name ; his friends called him by the first appellation. He was clad in the Arab costume, had large black eyes, and a countenance far from disagreeable, when he had his turban on ; but when he took it off two large ears rose by the side of his shaven head, covered by a red cap ; when the weather was fine, instead of his gown, he wore a military uniform, left on board by one of the passengers, which imparted to him a very grotesque appearance. He drank a good deal of wine when the sea was calm ; but in

stormy weather, he resumed his Mussulman dress and habits, locked himself up in his cabin, read the Koran, eat rice, and drank water. Unfortunately, the officer whom I had perceived on board was but a passenger. The East India Company had sent coals to Kosseir, which had been loaded on board Mehemet Ismaël's ship, "the Mahmoudiah." They knew how to estimate, it appears, the value of captains of his fashion, and if they troubled themselves but little for the safety of the passengers, they took more care of their own merchandize. Consequently they had sent Lieutenant Buckle, who was furnished with a chronometer, to accompany the coal and see it safely landed.

Mr. Buckle and I began a kind of contest the very first day of my arrival; for he could not speak French, and I did not understand English. We both of us wished to seize this opportunity of learning what we did not know, and each persisted in speaking the language which he comprehended the least. Mehemet Ismaël served me as a good auxiliary. As he spoke English we were obliged to use that language; and I owe to this unforeseen circumstance the acquirement of an inappreciable advantage. I understood several foreign languages, but none, Italian excepted, had been of any material service to me, in an intellectual point of view. I know of no work written in the Eastern languages which deserves perusal by any but the erudite. The French and English languages, on the other hand, are inexhaustible sources of instruction, as well as the two great links of intelligence among mankind. It is more especially to these two languages that the Turkish proverb, "*Bir dil bir Adam*," "A language

is a man," may be applied. In the hope of acquiring so great an advantage, I readily came to an agreement for my passage; upon which we all landed in order to acquaint the Anglo-Arabic functionary of our agreement.

Without a doubt, Sheikh Abdullah was the most important personage at Kosseir, at least during the absence of the Governor. He did not affect to dress better than his countrymen, but it was easy to discern his influence by the punctual attentions which were paid to him. He even ventured to open a public room, which was neat enough and surrounded with divans; and it was in his presence that the business of the city was discussed. These discussions were not without some interest for us at the time of my arrival. The Pacha had given orders that all the vessels in harbour should load by rotation; but Mehemet Ismaël maintained that no one had a right to prevent his taking whatever goods and passengers presented themselves on board. He asserted, not without reason, that his ship being of a larger tonnage than the craft of the country, was obliged to keep out from the shore, so as not to be exposed to any sudden squalls. His observation was well founded, because the port of Kosseir, quite open to the east, was but ill protected from the north by reefs which advanced into the sea; it is better guarded from the south by a chain of mountains of some elevation.

The bottom is rocky, and vessels could not venture to be at anchor, or be made fast with a hawser from the shore, had not experience shown that the wind blows from no other quarter than the north and the south in the Red Sea. An easterly gale

would strand all the vessels. Our Captain's arguments were based upon this. He also appealed to the liberty of trade, and developed his arguments with as much ingenuity as a professor of political economy. Unfortunately for him, there was a *baglo* in the harbour which belonged to Ibrahim Pacha, who, as well as his father, did not despise the advantages of commerce. This vessel was completing its cargo, so the merchants were constrained to send their goods on board of her, and the pilgrims on their way to Mecca were treated in the same arbitrary manner. In vain did Mehemet Ismaël address a complaint to the British Consul; he obtained no redress. His proceeding however luckily afforded me an opportunity of ascertaining a curious fact.

The agent at Kosseir was obliged to dispatch a courier with these complaints to his brother at Khenneh, and chose an Arab of the Desert to carry the letter. He was so thin and wan that he looked as if he could not hold himself upon his dromedary; yet he went to Khenneh and brought back the answer in twenty-eight hours. This was a journey of upwards of two hundred and twenty-five miles, and he had even been forced to halt for some time. It may be easily conceived that a dromedary could get over the distance in that short time; but it is astonishing how an Arab, perched upon a wretched wooden saddle, and exposing his bare head to the sun, could support the fatigue so long, and contrive to urge on his beast during twenty-eight hours. M. Vernet, in one of his beautiful designs has given the most correct idea of this Arab mode of travelling, and the posture maintained on the

saddle. Unfortunately this great painter has been unable to portray the frightful cries of the dromedary when he crosses the Desert with rapidity.

We found it more agreeable to live on board, where everything was in the European fashion, than in the Arab palace of Sheikh Abdullah; we went on shore every morning; and, as soon as the commercial discussions were at an end, walked about the town. It possessed but one very badly provided bazaar, which smelt horribly of dried fish; the houses were small and poor, but the concourse of pilgrims created some bustle. I had brought two along with me; they were *Mogrèbis*, from the west, that is to say from the Barbary States. They told me their history during their passage in my boat. One was a shoemaker, and the other a servant of a small mosque in Tangiers; they had travelled on foot from their native place to Tunis, and I made inquiries of them, as well as I was able, concerning the countries they had visited.

Unfortunately their ideas were not very clear, and geography could have benefited from their experience in no other way than by learning that they had everywhere met with a tolerable number of inhabitants, and found provisions in abundance. Since then, our expeditions in Africa have confirmed this fact. I inquired of them if they had seen any of our establishments, and they confessed that they had passed some within a very short distance; and that in order to sanctify their pilgrimage, they had even consecrated a few days to fighting, thinking that it would be meritorious to kill, if they could, a few of the unfaithful. These two *Mogrebis* and a

young Arab, who was in my service gave me a vast deal of trouble, both from their superstitious practices and their ignorance of Egyptian customs. If those who undertake pilgrimages to Mecca in large bodies are respected, very little consideration is entertained for isolated travellers; consequently, whenever they abandoned the boat, they were immediately seized by the Pacha's recruiting agents, and I had to reclaim them. Moreover there was no locality of any note, at which they did not think it incumbent on them to stop, pretending it was hallowed by some tradition. They carried talismans about their persons, and one of them even made these things in cases of need. A few cabalistic words, written by him on a piece of paper, sufficed, they believed, to preserve those who carried it from being struck by a musket ball. He was very much mortified one day, because I had killed a fowl which he hoped to save by this means.

When we fell in with any of those heaps of stones in the Desert, which indicate the tomb of a true believer who had died during the pilgrimage, they indulged in very noisy ceremonies. They first offered up, in an under tone, ejaculatory prayers, exclaiming, according to usage, "*Illah, il-allah,*" and inquiring the name of the martyr; then they all added a stone to the heap already formed; and the camel drivers mingling in the ceremony, which was executed with very little order, it ended sometimes in a mirthful stone-pelting conflict. Much time was lost in this manner; but it served to diminish the tediousness of the journey. At other times, they all began to howl like so many dervishes, until they were perfectly

exhausted. These two estimable *Mogrebis* vainly sought to get a passage in Mehemet Ismaël's ship; they were forcibly put on board Ibrahim Pacha's.

The concourse of pilgrims had brought, as is usual, a crowd of artizans to Kosseir. The pilgrimage is indeed far from being an obstacle to commerce, and those who undertake it carry merchandise, if they possess the means, and dispose of their goods where they halt; fruit and provision merchants abound everywhere. There are plenty of mountebanks and jugglers of all sorts, amongst whom the story-teller does not occupy the lowest rank. Several times when we walked along the coast, we observed a numerous auditory seated in a circle upon the ground, listening to a man who stood in the centre, narrating tales similar to those of "The Arabian Nights." Like Sheherazade, he frequently paused in the middle of the most interesting part, not like her to avert death, but simply to inform his auditory that he would not continue if he were not paid. He then made a collection, and when satisfied continued his story. At other times we fell in with jugglers; and one of them, without being invited, performed some tricks one day before Sheikh Abdullah, at whose house we happened to be at that moment.

Mr. Buckle and myself wished to ascertain with accuracy to what extent this man could carry his dexterity, and we agreed respecting the price for which he was to play privately before us. On the appointed day he came, carrying all his instruments in a small bag; he was only attended by a little boy, about six or seven years of age. He spread before him an old and dirty

carpet, squatted down, and, after having produced his goblets and nutmegs, went through the same tricks as are played in Europe. His sleight of hand was not very novel, and we found nothing to notice but his ability in elocution, which art he employed to divert the attention of his spectators. He had neither the coarse manners, nor the repulsive appearance of those jugglers whom we meet with in public in, Europe.

I was very much struck not only with the similarity of the tricks, but also with the identity of the form in which they were exhibited; and it is that more especially which induces me to speak of so trivial a matter. While counting his nutmegs, he did so in six or seven different languages; and when the little boy who sat close beside him half asleep had to play his part, he stuck a kind of cap on his head, very similar to that worn by our clowns, and asked him the following questions:—"Are you a Christian?" "No." "Are you a Jew?" "No." "Are you a Greek?" "No." Are you a Mahometan?" "Yes, a Mahometan, a Mahometan, a Mahometan!" During this dialogue the little fellow ran to and fro before his master's carpet. These scenes were enacted on the borders of the Red Sea, in a town which has very little intercourse with Europe; the players were Arabs who had never quitted their own country, and whose representations were intended to please their countrymen. I have seen the same thing repeated on the banks of the Euphrates, and, with a few variations, in India. I did not trouble myself to ascertain in which country the greatest dexterity was displayed.

To explain the reason why this amusement is nearly the same all over the old world appears to me important, and well worthy the attention of antiquarians. Amongst the other amusements of the Arabs, the art of dancing is not neglected. It is well known that in Asia the practice of this art is not over modest; but in Egypt it is so obscene, and the songs which accompany it are so lewd, that it is impossible to describe it. I have often wondered that persons of rigid morals, ladies, and more especially young girls, could submit to travel in Egypt. Nevertheless, English women, who pride themselves upon their modesty, flock there in numbers. It is impossible for them, when they go up the Nile, to avoid seeing the boatmen. If the horrible din of the tam-tam, or their ignorance of the language prevents them from understanding the words, or hearing the songs, the gestures used at least cannot escape observation. Sometimes these boatmen, stripping off their blue shirts, throw themselves into the water in a complete state of nudity; again, when their daily toil is ended, they dance and put themselves into such indecent postures, as would not be tolerated in France even in the presence of the lowest women. Yet fair ladies look on all this, and affect an indifference and an innocence of look which certainly form not the least extraordinary part of the spectacle; whilst Arab women and even those of the Levant do not stand upon so much ceremony; for they gaze with effrontery, laugh outright, and encourage the most impudent performers.

Whenever we remained on board we spent our time in fishing. It is not in this part of the Red

Sea that fish is most abundant; nevertheless we caught a good quantity of that species called *Bamia*, which plays no unimportant part in the kitchens of Indian vessels. They are dried and given to the sailors to season their rice with. Some European mariners have so accustomed themselves to this fish, that to miss them would be no small deprivation; they are always to be found, as well as boiled rice, at Indian breakfasts. We also caught a few *dorados*, and one day hooked a shark which measured about fifteen feet; but the line broke just as we were on the point of landing him. With respect to shooting, we made a few excursions round the town, but no living creature showed itself upon the barren soil; even vultures and crows, those two constant denizens of the Desert, had abandoned it.

Our spirits were only supported, in this idle and monotonous existence, by the promise which Mehemet Ismaël daily gave us of a speedy departure; but he was not the man to keep his promises exactly. While he entertained the hope of conquering the provisional governor by entreaties, threats or abuse, he decided upon waiting for a freight. When his expectations were foiled, he feigned to set sail. One day, at last, after his attempts had proved more useless than ever, he came on board greatly irritated, accompanied by Sheikh Abdullah, and weighed anchor. We had three or four passengers whom the authorities had not dared to arrest because they were related to the Sheikh. Consequently we put to sea, and Mehemet Ismaël took leave of our host with tears in his eyes. No sooner had the latter set foot

in his boat to return, than a violent wind arose; he was unable to reach the port, and was driven to a great distance among the rocks, running much danger. We watched him from our ship, and Mehemet Ismaël exclaimed in Persian: "Go, thou son of a dog, accursed agent of the Kafirs, who dost not possess influence enough to procure me even a bag of beans as part of my freight. Mayest thou be drowned and be damned like thy father, wicked Sunee!"

This imprecation did not however prevent Sheikh Ibrahim from landing safe and sound. We beheld him, after his boat had been dashed to pieces, receive the congratulations of his friends; he re-entered the town accompanied by the whole population which had flown to his assistance.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RED SEA.

Jeddah—The English agent—Sir Alexander Burnes—Pilgrimage to Mecca—Fish and shells of the Red Sea.

Besides Lieutenant Buckle whom Mehemet Ismaël, in consequence of his daily promises to set sail, had induced to remain on board, we had a pilot from Mocha, a Wahabite in creed, and esteemed very expert in his profession. Nevertheless we followed the ordinary track, which is not to sail direct for Jeddah, but to cross eastwards sailing along the coast of Arabia. I do not believe that the direct line is very hazardous; but the one we pursued is the most advantageous to the vessels of the country. It is very difficult for them to ascertain their exact position in the open sea, and besides the working of the ship is not easily executed. I shall explain elsewhere the Arab system of navigation, for I have had opportunities of studying it. In the Red Sea, as soon as they have reached the Arabian coast, most of them pass between the islands which are to be found there, and come to anchor every night at some well known place. It frequently happens that both

passengers and sailors land, and a voyage that the winds, which are always regular in those latitudes, would allow of being made in three or four days, generally occupies twelve or fifteen.

The monsoons are not felt in the Red Sea as in the Indian Ocean, notwithstanding which there are two distinct seasons: the one when ships enter by the Straits of Babelmandel, the other when they make their exit that way. These seasons are regulated in the following manner, and the navigation is determined accordingly.

From the month of May to November, the wind usually blows along that sea from the north; after that period, although northerly winds continue at Suez, they set in from the south at the Straits of Babelmandel. It is in the neighbourhood of Jeddah that the effect of both winds ceases; consequently calms or variable breezes are more felt there than at any other point. The southern winds are more violent than the northern ones, and cause navigators to run greater risks: they come on by squalls and raise a greater quantity of dust. The peculiar tendency which one wind has to agitate the sea and raise the sand more than any other, and which is owing not to its strength but its direction, is a phenomenon worthy of observation, and one which has never yet been explained. Certain it is that calms are felt in the Red Sea, during which land breezes blow, there as elsewhere, throughout the night until morning. Then the calm recommences and lasts until ten A.M. when the wind gets up again. It is owing to these land breezes that the ships of the country succeed in reaching Suez. Although they sail towards the

south with facility, they take a long time to go northwards. They frequently require a month to sail from Jeddah to Kosseir; and it is not considered a long voyage for an European vessel, when no more than thirty days are consumed in going from Babelmandel to Suez, whereas six or eight only are required to sail from the latter to the former place. I think it requisite to give these details because all commercial transactions on the Red Sea are calculated in accordance with the physical phenomena which I have indicated; and they are not indeed without influence upon the political situation of Arabia.

We had delightful weather for our passage, and perceived Mount Arafat on the third morning at day-break, at sight of which the pilgrims whom we had on board appeared on deck in their devotional costume. Their heads were shaven, they had taken off their turbans, and instead of their ordinary dresses, they wore two pieces of linen cloth, one of which was wrapt round their bodies, the other thrown across their shoulders. All the *hajji* are obliged to adopt this dress from the moment they perceive the holy mountain until all the ceremonies are terminated. During the whole of this period they must disregard all attention to their persons, abstain from bathing, allow their beard and hair to grow, keep their heads uncovered, and fast. I could not contemplate their first ceremonies without interest, after having resided so long amongst Mahometans, and now finding myself in these parts, precisely at the time when they perform what they consider to be the most important act of their lives. In the course of the day, we caught a glimpse of the white walls of Jeddah,

and at night anchored in the port, in the midst of some fine European ships, and a great number of Arab vessels. It was not without some alarm that we passed amongst the reefs which formed the harbour, and sailed through one of its very narrow channels; on the right and the left, breakers and rocks were perceptible a few feet under the ship's keel. It required indeed a very able pilot to prevent the ship from grounding; and, without the assistance of Mr. Buckle, who directed the operation, I have my doubts whether we should have entered without an accident. In vain did the pilot tell the *nacoda* what he was to do; not understanding the orders, he could not execute them. There are three natural channels through the *madreporite* rocks, which form the port of Jeddah, and serve to protect it as a breakwater. The anchorage is excellent, and vessels lie there in perfect safety.

We landed the following morning, and I was agreeably surprised to find an Arab town pretty well built, cleanly, and not quite devoid of elegance. It was surrounded with walls, and a gate opened upon the landing place. Passing through this, we found ourselves in a large square, containing several pieces of artillery. Here were the Custom House and the Harbour master's abode; and close by, the pilgrims were assembled in various coffee-houses. There was a considerable crowd, but having apparently little occupation, they were very quiet. We repaired to the British agent, a Catholic of Bagdad, who received me very politely, and offered me hospitality. This was Malum Youssouf, who inhabited a very good house where he carried on a considerable trade. As he only spoke Turkish and

Arabic, I do not know how he and those who had appointed him understood each other. He filled the same situation as his colleagues of Kosseir and Khenneh, and his appointment rested simply upon the letter of the Governor of Bombay, who had nominated him without further ceremony. I do not think that they even took the trouble of acquainting the Egyptian government with this appointment. Malum Youssouf had been clerk to a rich merchant of Bagdad, named Hajji Naaman, whom he all at once quitted, no one knew why. He then directed his steps to Bassora, from thence he went to Bengal, and after trading upon the Red Sea, had finally fixed himself at Jeddah. Being well acquainted with the Arabic language, and writing it better than most Christians, he soon acquired influence in the town, and extended his business even into Abyssinia. As soon as his appointment gave him some assurance that he would not be harassed by the government, he extended his commerce and built two vessels, one in the European, the other in the Arab style; intending the former for the Indian trade, and the latter for the Red Sea.

I do not hesitate to say, that he had a leaning to the slave trade; for he not only possessed some Greek slaves, who had been sold to him after the capture of Chio, and upon whom he looked as his children, but I myself saw him receive other Abyssinian slaves than those who attended upon him in his house; after examining these, in order to ascertain their value, he sent them off to Mecca for sale. I confess, that this appeared to me rather a strange traffic for the representative of

a nation which protests so loudly against the slave trade.

Be this as it may, Malum Youssouf was polite, obliging, and if like most Asiatics he did not neglect his interest, at least he possessed that knowledge of European sentiments which pertains only to Christians. He had fitted up a room where we could take rest without fear of intrusion from the Arabs ; and he provided travellers with apartments furnished after the European fashion. They, who for any length of time have been deprived of these luxuries, can alone appreciate their real value, and the delight of again finding them. As regarded business, Malum Youssouf transacted all his affairs at his door ; he had placed two wooden platforms under the archway, and there received his visitors. Whilst he was talking or making purchases, the slaves who surrounded him offered pipes and coffee. He only quitted his post to take his meals, and employed his evenings in reading or writing.

The town was governed for the Pacha by Soliman Aga, whose origin has escaped my memory, but with whom the people were pretty well satisfied. A few regular troops occupied the citadel under the command of a Georgian slave, who had attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel ; the Custom House was conducted by an Arab, remarkable for his prodigious corpulency. The Harbour Master was a Turk, who had been taken prisoner by the English, and spoke their language. It was rumoured that all these worthies understood each other perfectly in helping themselves before the Pacha. This alleged fact, the veracity of which I

do not doubt, I learned from some Europeans in the Egyptian service who happened to be at Jeddah. They affected very great indignation, unaware, perhaps, that robbery is the basis of all Turkish administration. This did not prevent me from accompanying Lieutenant Buckle, who was likewise staying at Malum Youssouf's house, on a visit to the Governor, who received us very graciously. This was the only time, during my stay at Jeddah, that I had any communication with the local authorities; Europeans were much respected, and free to go where they choose. At the gate of their Holy City, during the epoch of the Ramazan, and the festival which follows it, Mahometans of all countries evince less fanaticism and are most sparing of their epithets against infidels than is the case elsewhere.

The Europeans whom I saw at Jeddah were officers of different ranks in the Egyptian army; one of them was a French doctor, who had charge of the hospital, and he did not appear to be dissatisfied with the administration of affairs. He received the necessary medicaments in convenient quantities, and that department was pretty well conducted. I do not know if the two masters, who directed the music of the regiment, were enabled to pass the same encomiums on their bands, but I never heard such discordant sounds as they caused to be performed in my presence. They were Italian or French airs which the poor Arabs, who had been seized in the manner already mentioned, were obliged to learn, and which they certainly do not understand. The Egyptian chiefs have no conception what an *artiste* should be. As the musical profession is not held in

esteem by Mahometans, every one who distinguishes himself and who has seen some service, petitions to join the ranks, and his request is rarely refused. Consequently, the band masters lose their pupils as soon as they are formed. It is impossible to form an idea of the repugnance which Mahometans nourish for European music and drums. They beat the tattoo at Jeddah, and performed music every night at sunset. I sometimes went to see the troops, and although it was a novel spectacle to many of the strangers in the town, none were ever present.

Besides his official agents, the Pacha of Egypt had several persons here who were intrusted with his private and commercial affairs. One of the most important of these, who had been intimate with Mehemet Ali from childhood, and to whom I spoke about the troops and the music, did not hesitate to avow the horror with which these innovations inspired him.

"It is well enough," said he, "for infidels and wretched Arabs; but where is the respectable man who can look upon these things without feeling disgust?" He assured me that his master entertained similar ideas; that he regarded his regular troops as a useful agent in governing, but he allowed none for whom he had any esteem to enter that corps or to remain long attached to it. I am inclined to put faith in this assurance, and should not be surprised to learn that, in Egypt, the same contempt is entertained for them as I have witnessed in Turkey.

I also met at Jeddah M. Mary, a French officer, who, having been a drummer, had risen

to the rank of an officer in our service. He had been a prisoner in England, then served under the Greeks, had afterwards offered himself to the Pacha, and was now a Major and aid-de-camp to Ahmed Pacha, nephew to Mehemet Ali, and Governor of Mecca. A powerful Arab tribe, that of the Assirs, had revolted, and Ahmed Pacha had been sent to quell it. As this Pacha was an ignorant fellow, who some time previously came to Egypt as a simple Aïta, with twelve francs a month pay, he was placed under the tutelage of M. Mary. The war was not successful, nor could it be so, for there as elsewhere it was impossible to come up with the Arabs; and as the country produces nothing, and all the provisions were brought at a heavy expense from Egypt, after a few days' march the troops stood in need of a fresh supply of every thing. M. Mary took the precaution of noting down all his own observations during the campaign, to which he had added the communications made to him by others. Aided by this information he drew up a map, of which he presented me with a copy.* I sent it to M. Fresnel, who was kind enough to forward it to M. Jomard, the person most capable of appreciating and making

* The Pacha however had ended the affair by signing, in 1834, a treaty with Ait, the most powerful Sheikh of the Assir tribe. By this Wadi, Beni Cheher, Belet Amer, Abouwarich, Sabia and some villages were ceded to the Pacha. The Sheikh was to keep the peace with the Pacha's friends, or the treaty was to be held null. It need hardly be added that war recommenced in 1835.

The following are the names of the principal tribes which are to be found between Taïfa, (near Mecca,) and Medina; those of Assir, and those of Taïfa at Assir. The men who are efficient and capable of bearing arms are alone counted, and they are divided into three classes [the

use of it. M. Mary was short in stature, of an active spirit, and of undoubted courage. He had enjoyed, far more than Soliman Pacha, the confidence of Ibrahim, and was in his service at the time of our expedition into Greece. Our officers, more especially General Sebastiani, treated him with much kindness, and he deserved it for his frankness. I am also pretty certain that during M. de Bois-le-Comte's mission to Turkey and

—the *Hedjaz* or highlanders, the *Tchama*, or inhabitants of the plains, and the *Bedouins* or wanderers.

THE PRINCIPAL TRIBES OF THE KABYLES IN HEDJAS AND YEMEN.

FROM TAÏFA TO MEDINA.

Bdil-Ejadla, Tahem-Edel	6,000
El-Harb	15,000
Jehaina	10,000
El-Soleclu	3,000
Heteba	15,000
El-Bagourn	3,000
El-Soubia	3,000
Moter	8,000
Gahten	12,000
Devouasser	4,000
	79,000

KABYLES OF ASSIR.

	Hedjaz.	Tchama.	Bedouins.	Total.
Ben-el-Asmar	3,000	1,000	500	4,500
Ben-Akmar	3,000	1,500	500	5,000
Charaan	7,000	1,000	3000	11,000
Assir	7,000	7,000	"	14,000
Roufeïda	3,000	1,000	"	4,000
Abida	6,000	"	"	6,000
				44,500

[Kabyles

Egypt, the information which Captain Mary furnished him with was neither the least important nor the least exact. Besides, we had another companion in Doctor Pruner, a Prussian medical man, who was also staying with Malum Youssouf. He was a very intelligent and learned man, full of information, and who had more especially devoted his time to the study of diseases of the eye. Ahmed Pacha was suffering from ophthalmia, and Doctor Pruner had accompanied him from Egypt to Arabia. As however Christians are not permitted to set foot in Mecca, and the Pacha was obliged to go there while preparations were making for the ceremony, his medical adviser had returned to Jeddah

KABYLES OF TAÏF AT ASSIR.

	Hedjaz.	Tchama.	Bedouins.	Total.
Tsequif and Arbama	4,000	"	"	4,000
Beni-Saad . .	2,000	"	"	2,000
Hasra . . .	2,000	"	"	2,000
Tsequif-Zerga . .	500	"	"	500
Beni-Malec . .	4,000	"	"	4,000
Zaaran . . .	3,000	5,000	"	8,000
Rhamid . . .	9,000	2,000	2,000	13,000
Somrauk, Katsan .	4,000	6,000	2,000	12,000
Bucha . . .	5,000	"	"	5,000
Beni-Amer . .	2,000	500	"	2,500
Beni-Cher . .	9,000	3,000	1,000	13,000
				66,000

RECAPITULATION.

Kabyles of Taïf to Medina	79,000
Kabyles of Assir	44,500
Kabyles of Taïf to Assir	66,000
Grand Total*	189,500

* The total is made 206,500 in the original; there must therefore be some error in the details.—TRANSLATOR.

where he was soon attacked by the very disease which he was specially occupied in curing. I have shown that we were not without society; and the number of our companions increased daily.

The ships which we found at anchor were chiefly laden with pilgrims; but those whose sole object was trade soon made their appearance also. The *Hugh Lindsay* was the first to arrive, and was then the only steamer belonging to the East India Company; she was making her experimental trip in order to establish, *via* Suez, regular communications between Bombay and England. She brought dispatches from Europe, and put into Jeddah for a supply of coals, having on board a no less remarkable person than Sir Alexander Burnes, whose end was afterwards so deplorable. He had been sent to India with dispatches, and had just published the narrative of his overland journey to Europe. I do not wish to enter into the merits of that publication, but it must be confessed that the interest that was then attached to those countries, through which Sir Alexander passed, in consequence of the projects attributed both to Russia and England, exaggerated the value and the difficulties of his undertaking. Indeed, some years previously, an Italian named Ventura, and a French captain, M. Allard, had, at the suggestion of M. Mazarowitch, the Russian minister at the court of Persia, journeyed by the same route. And at a later period, M. Court, a Lieutenant of the old Imperial Guard, who was far superior in education and information to his predecessors, had also followed the same track; others succeeded them, even Mr. Wolff, the German missionary, undertook the journey from Persia to India

accompanied by far greater dangers. I am not aware that M. Court took notes of his journey; but, if he did, it is probable that his facts are of more value than those of Sir Alexander Burnes. Independent of his being an excellent geographer and draughtsman, he speaks Persian, not like most Europeans, with difficulty and inaccuracy, but understands it perfectly, and is acquainted with its literature; his labours have often enriched the journal of the "Asiatic Society of Calcutta." It must further be taken into consideration, that Sir Alexander's work had been taken up by the East India Company, and was revised and corrected by Mr. Elphinstone, a man who justly enjoys the reputation of being better acquainted with Asia than any other person; that not only did he add his own observations, but caused the author to suppress certain passages which he considered prejudicial to the interests of the British Government. I think it is but fair to make these remarks here, as the merit of Sir Alexander's enterprise has been singularly exaggerated, and his countrymen, in order to extol him, seem to have forgotten that he had numerous predecessors. His fame has also spread upon the continent, where it is customary to rely upon the English for whatever relates to Asia.

No sooner had he arrived at Jeddah, than the first care of this celebrated traveller was to verify an assertion advanced by the missionary Wolff, with whom he had had a quarrel at Cabul, where they first met. The missionary affirmed that he had preached the Scriptures at Jeddah, near the Mecca gate, which fact appeared rather strange to those who are acquainted with Mahometans. He made inquiries

of Malum Youssouf, with whom the missionary had lodged, and I acted as interpreter at this singular inquiry. I addressed Youssouf in Turkish, repeated what he said to Sir Alexander in Persian, which both of us spoke ill enough; and he communicated the words in English to those of his countrymen who were present, namely, Captain Wilson, commander of the *Hugh Lindsay*, Lieutenant Buckle, and Mr. Frazer, one of the passengers. The following is the result of Malum Youssouf's narration—who, by the bye, did not understand the motive of the inquiry.

Mr. Wolff was extremely absent, and remarkable for simplicity; talking to himself, getting up and making speeches all day long, and even the greater part of the night; passing indeed for an irrational being. Malum Youssouf never could make out what he was talking about. One day, about the dinner hour, his guest sallied forth towards the gate of Mecca with a Bible under his arm; Youssouf sent his sister after him to say dinner was waiting, and he immediately returned. It appears that nothing extraordinary had occurred, for no person paid the least attention to him; at all events, if he had spoken or gesticulated, no one had noticed it. When I stated that he had preached, Malum Youssouf replied: "That is very probable; he could do so at his leisure and without danger, for no person could understand what he had to say." This explanation of a fact affirmed by so sincere a man as Dr. Wolff, and which every one knows could not have occurred, appears to me at least natural. I have met that missionary, and know the strange delusion into

which he has fallen, as to his oratorical faculties. His French wearied me so at Trebizond, that I addressed him in Italian; the British Consul spoke French with him. I could not comprehend a word he said in Persian, and others were not more fortunate; neither did he understand Turkish; yet prided himself on speaking with fluency all these languages and many others besides. His countrymen assured me too that his German pronunciation was very disagreeable; in a word, no preacher could be less adapted for polyglotic eloquence than he, although he flattered himself to the contrary.

Fond of adventure and travelling, imagining himself a prophet, he had perambulated the world, preaching the Scripture everywhere, and as he conceived, without any one mistaking his errand. He was besides very ignorant, and a very bad theologian; the Abbé de Couperie had put him out of countenance several times at Bagdad, where he had been unable to support the most ordinary doctrines of the Protestant Church. When Sir Alexander Burnes met him at Cabul, he had gone thither, through some unaccountable impulse, to seek the lost tribes of Israel; and he returned from thence at a later period by India and the Red Sea. He has now resumed the same journey in order to set free two Englishmen, whom he supposes to be prisoners at Bokhara. I am inclined to believe that his journey will be an useless one; if Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly, who are reported to have been assassinated, are fortunately alive, Mr. Wolff's interference will serve them but little. Their relations, their friends, and even the British Govern-

ment, ought to have adopted better measures for their deliverance than to send a man whose zeal and whose courage are indeed incontestible, but whose extravagant notions can only increase the difficulties of the case.

No sooner had these investigations been brought to a close, than Sir Alexander visited the town, and failed not to perceive that our host carried on the slave trade. He had a quick penetrating mind, and his society was very agreeable. Although well pleased with the reception he had met with in England, and the honours he had obtained, he was very unassuming and natural in his manners, and showed proof of much frankness in his conversation. I was invited to dine on board the *Hugh Lindsay*, when we conversed a great deal about Persia and Eastern policy. It was not difficult for me to discover that the man, who was destined to enact so brilliant a part, and doomed to so tragical an end, had adopted the opinions of Sir John MacNeil. The *Hugh Lindsay* only remained one day at Jeddah, and my quondam companion, Mr. Buckle, took his departure on board of her for Bombay.

These travellers were soon replaced by others, for shortly afterwards, twenty vessels of European build entered the port, some under the Arab, others under British colours. One of the latter belonged to a Persian chief, the Sheikh of Bushire, and was called *Nazaret Shah;* the captain was an Englishman; but a Persian supercargo was on board. The other vessels, whatever their flag, were all under the command of a *nacoda*, who, if he doubted his own capacity, sometimes took

an officer of the European merchant service to superintend the ship; these were called navigators. It seldom happens that these navigators and the real captains live in harmony. The one being Mahometans and the others Christians, they mutually offend each other by their incompatible habits and religious beliefs. Victory generally decides in favour of the *nacodas*, when any discussion arises, because most of the sailors are their brethren in faith, and the poor navigator stands alone. Sometimes, it is true, he is the terror of the crew; but on the other hand, none of his subordinates would commit themselves by partaking of his repast, or speaking familiarly with him, as they look upon him in the light of an infidel.

Thus, although surrounded by their fellow-creatures, the navigators are as much deprived of society as if they were living in a desert. Several gave themselves up to drinking, in order to beguile the time, and thereby render themselves still more odious in the eyes of their companions; and it seldom happens that they make many voyages on board the same ship. When I was at Jeddah, I heard the complaints which the *nacodas* laid against their navigators before Malum Youssouf, who very fortunately had no judicial power; although a Christian and a British agent, he was above all a merchant; and as the *nacodas* who employed him as their broker gave him orders, he would not have failed to condemn their adversaries. He usually endeavoured to conciliate both parties, and had discovered a very simple process in order to attain this object: by inducing the *nacodas* to exchange their navigators. One day,

however, he was very much perplexed, when the captain of the *Nazaret Shah* complained of his supercargo. The captain commanded the ship, but the latter disposed of the goods. The master could not be removed, and there was too much to be risked by offending the supercargo ; moreover, the question was one of discipline, which the unfortunate Youssouf did not understand. Asiatic cunning was displayed in all its brilliancy on this occasion. The captain obtained no redress, but withdrew perfectly satisfied, because the British agent approved of his line of conduct, and recommended moderation, as it was impossible to reason with his antagonist who was a stupid Arab. With regard to the latter, he was no less satisfied ; he was advised to abandon his pretensions, and no longer compromise the dignity of his character by quarrelling with a drunkard.

Since I have made mention of this worthy supercargo, it is worth stating that his name was Sheikh Abdoul Rassoul ; he deserves being made known, for he afterwards became our agent at Mocha. He was a Persian, carrying on trade, and it was said possessed a handsome fortune. On his arrival at Bombay, he had purchased goods, and freighted the *Nazaret Shah*, on board of which he had come to Jeddah, where I met him. From thence he was to have sent coffee in payment of his goods ; but, after having disembarked his merchandize and planted himself so as to effect the sales, he left the vessel to return empty, at which those who had given him credit were much displeased. However, after this transaction he established himself at Mocha, where he pos-

sessed property, and had the honour of receiving Captain Laplace. This gentleman thought proper to recommend our Consul-General in Egypt to appoint him French agent; and certainly a worse choice could not have been made. His integrity was held in little repute, he belonged to the Shia sect, and consequently was much despised by the Arabs. Shortly after his installation, the English sent out their expedition against Aden; and thinking that this was a favourable opportunity to apply for money, he demanded two hundred thousand francs of the Pacha, promising to drive away these strangers if his request were complied with. Not having succeeded, he changed his tactics forthwith, and made himself the agent of those whom he at first intended to attack. A firman, authorizing him to hoist the French flag, having been sent to him from Egypt, he seized that opportunity to display the British colours. This step very much displeased the Arabs, who hated him on account of his creed; they hauled down the flag, upon which a reparation was demanded, and the English were on the point of seizing upon Mocha. They would not have failed to do so, had they not had, at the same time, sufficient other embarrassments in hand. This affair does not give a very high idea of the prudence of our government, since it authorized an officer, perfectly ignorant of the localities, to make an appointment to which very serious responsibility may be attached. It is, unfortunately, not the only fact of the same nature which I shall have to relate.

The Ramazan now drawing to a close, the *festi-*

val of Courban-Baïram was on the eve of commencing; and the pilgrims who crowded the streets of Jeddah, taking their departure, the town soon became deserted. I was very anxious to witness this ceremony; but, although speaking with some facility one or two of the requisite languages, my proficiency did not enable me to pass for an Asiatic; and, as all Christians intruding are put to death, I nowise coveted the honour of becoming a martyr to science. I did, however, enter into negotiation with a camel driver; and it was all but settled that I should assume a woman's veil, and get into one of those baskets which hang on either side of the camel, and which are closed by curtains. In this way very little danger would have been incurred; I might have gone through Mecca and ascended Mount Arafat, without being recognised. But unfortunately when I came to make the experiment, the basket appeared so small, that I was alarmed at the thought of being confined five or six days in the same position, in a high temperature. The driver's heart also failed him, for his fate would have been similar to mine had we been discovered; the plan was consequently abandoned.

I experienced little regret when the ceremony was over, for a Pole, who had embraced the Mahometan religion, arrived shortly afterwards from Jeddah, and furnished me with ample details. I gathered further information from others, and only learned in addition to what has been stated by other travellers, one interesting fact. A Mahometan may claim the title of pilgrim when he has been on Mount Arafat whilst prayers are said there on the appointed day at noon, and has seen the

principal mollah wave a handkerchief, and cry *Allah akbar*, which it is impossible so large a multitude can hear. The visit to the black stone, the sacred water, the well of Zem-Zem, and the throwing of stones to drive away evil spirits, are all deeds of piety but not held to be indispensable. The following is the routine observed.

Generally speaking, a pilgrim arrives a long time previous to the ceremony, and, as I have already stated, assumes a peculiar dress as soon as he comes in sight of Mount Arafat. Having entered Mecca, he distributes alms, if he be rich, to all religious establishments, and offers up prayers in the holy places. Sometimes he fasts before the first day of the Ramazan, but always throughout that month during the day time; at night, he gives himself up, as is elsewhere customary at that hour, to all sorts of excesses, wine excepted. Debauchery is carried on to a very great extent at Mecca, and crowds of public women come there from Egypt, and other places at the period of pilgrimage. The head-quarters of many of them are at Jeddah, where they have settled in order to be able to go to Mecca at the most favourable period. The immense concourse of strangers has made that city the centre of a considerable trade. All sorts of Asiatic merchandize are to be met with there, although it often happens that the common necessaries of life are wanting; every thing is dear, and many pilgrims are obliged to sell their effects in order to live. The government is under the necessity of providing for a great number of them; and Mehemet Ali Pacha has gained the reputation of being a good Mussulman, by sending annually a great quantity

of provisions for the indigent. They are obliged to pay a heavy tax to the mollahs to obtain permission to enter the mosques, or to procure relics. The produce of these taxes is divided between the Shereeff of Mecca and the chiefs of the mosques.

The porter, who by hereditary right opened the door of the great mosque, was cited as being one of the richest personages of Asia; and it was rumoured that his wealth caused him to be poisoned. The person also who sells the water of Zem-Zem is of no small importance. I am unacquainted with the method adopted by government to seize upon, which it certainly does, the profits of the mollahs; but in exacting from the Shereeff, the ordinary routine is followed. Whether he be a dependant on the Porte or on the Pacha, the process is the same; some relation is always at hand to solicit and obtain the appointment along with some pecuniary assistance. If he cannot sustain himself during the first period of his instalment, he is protected. The discarded Shereeff endeavours to regain his situation, and accordingly lavishes his treasure; thus by supporting successive candidates, government seizes upon all that they possess. The sectarians of the four orthodox divisions each have, in the great mosque at Mecca, a separate column round which they assemble. As for the sect of Ali, they are scarcely tolerated, and are subjected to all sorts of degradations. They are often prevented from entering the mosques, and from visiting the sacred places; at other times they obtain permission only after sums of money have been extorted from them. When the great caravan quits Mecca, on its three days' journey to Mount

Arafat, they have not the right of mingling with the Sunee. These humiliations are not one of the least grievances complained of by Persia against Turkey.

A singular custom authorizes the Bedouin Arabs to pillage all those whom they may meet with on the highways four days previous to the festival. They say, that at that period, all true believers ought to be assembled at Mecca in order to accompany the procession; that loiterers are miscreants deserving of no compassion. Then also do all the authorities of Jeddah, and all those who are not obliged to remain there, hasten to the ceremony; shops are closed, the Mahometan sailors abandon their ships, and the city gates are barricaded. Any undertaking which does not relate to the pilgrimage is impracticable, and great danger is incurred by whoever sets about any thing at that time. Captain Corner, an English officer very nearly proved this to his cost. He had arrived from India with the intention of returning to Europe by Egypt; and, although advised to the contrary, insisted on continuing his voyage before the termination of the *hajjilik*. He procured a boat to take him; but he shortly returned, after being wrecked. The sailors, in their remorse for not having assisted at the Baïram, ran their vessel upon the rocks, and then swam on shore. Captain Corner was most fortunately able to imitate their example; but he lost all his baggage, except his uniform, and was obliged to accept some clothes which we offered him.

Nothing, it is said, equals the confusion which

prevails during this ceremony, more especially towards its close. Mecca is a town of extreme gloominess, and incredible aridity, surrounded by naked mountains, and the heat is insupportable. When the pilgrims go to Arafat, each of them is obliged to immolate a victim; an immense number of sheep are consequently killed, whose intestines and bones, scattered here and there, disgust the senses and infect the air. As no order is observed in the march, the camels often run against each other and are thrown down, upon which tumults and battles ensue, in which many persons are wounded; and it often happens that they are even trodden to death by the crowd. Our *nacoda* returned after having been very ill-treated; he had quarrelled with the muleteer, who, recognising him as a Shia, threw a fragment of rock at him; and, in attempting to avoid it, he rolled down the slope of Arafat, and was severely hurt. As soon as the prayer on the mountain is ended, couriers are dispatched to all quarters in order to carry the news; those to whom they announce the intelligence making them presents. Several are sent to Constantinople, and the first who arrives is very well rewarded by the Sultan. Every one now prepares to return homewards, but though the majority come by way of Egypt, the continuance of the northern winds, which renders the voyage to Suez difficult, induces them to join the great caravan of Damascus. A few cross Arabia and reach the Euphrates. The young Pole, whom I had seen, had travelled that way; I endeavoured, without success, to obtain from him a few notes on his interesting journey; but he

wished to publish them himself, and I fear that death, which overtook him shortly afterwards, has prevented him from carrying out his intentions.

The pilgrims, on the eve of their departure for Jeddah, often present a very sad spectacle. The Ramazan of 1835 terminated in the month of May. The heat was at times suffocating, and it may easily be conceived what effect the rays of a vertical sun must have produced upon the naked heads, and on the bodies of those who, for the most part, were born in temperate climates. A great many die of brain fever; others exhibit haggard eyes, swollen faces and foaming mouths. The number of mendicants seemed prodigious, even to those who had visited Egypt. Most of them entreated that they might be transported gratuitously, and Mehemet Ali gave instructions to that effect. But it may be conceived in what manner Turks execute such orders—how the poor creatures were huddled together in the vessels, how they were treated, and in what manner they were fed; but especially how water was doled out to them. Water, in fact, is a most important element in those countries. At a little distance from Jeddah, there are cisterns in which the water is gathered when it rains, and these cisterns are closed and barricaded like fortresses. During the season of the pilgrimage, water is often sold at a very high price. Unfortunate indeed is that vessel which puts into Jeddah for a supply of water. However abstemious Mahometans may be, whatever little value they may set on the comforts of life, the pilgrimage to Mecca is surrounded by so many privations, fatigues, and dangers, that Captain Mary,

who had resided many years in the country, maintained that one fifth part of the pilgrims annually fall victims. This consideration does not alarm their successors; for death met in the accomplishment of such a duty, they consider as an absolution from all their sins.

My researches and observations on the pilgrims to Mecca did not prevent me from attending to other things. No sooner had Lieutenant Buckle and myself disembarked, than we began collecting shells, which are so abundant in these parts. Sometimes we fished for them ourselves, at others we sent out a boat for that purpose. We soon formed a collection of such as are found in the neighbourhood of Jeddah, and by making exchanges obtained nearly all those of the Red Sea. I sent mine to the Museum of Natural History at Paris, together with a collection of sub-marine plants and corals which I took especial care to collect. We often made excursions over the bay, and I accepted with much pleasure the hospitality of Captain Stuart, master of the *Nazaret Shah*. In the evening, when the excessive heat had subsided, we got into his boat, and went to observe these wonders of the ocean, which can only be seen there in all the resplendence of its beauty. Fancy, at a little distance from the spot where vessels anchor, a forest of coral of every shape and colour, visible at the bottom of a sea, blue as the Mediterranean, and smooth as a mirror. Through the branches of these corals, and in the grottoes which they form, thousands of fish, far more beautiful and glittering than those we get from China, are to be seen pursuing each other, and hiding themselves on hear-

ing the least noise; further on, they find complete concealment in a wilderness of sub-marine plants.

Beyond this is a bank of the finest and whitest possible sand; during calm weather, thousands of porpoises flock there, and resting on their tails, thrust their bodies half out of the water, and with open mouths lie inhaling the evening breeze. It is not until very nearly approached that they attempt to escape, and even then they swim so slowly, that they appear to move off with regret. One day I was able to strike with my oar an enormous ray which had not fled at our approach. I know that the hues of fish are far more bright when seen in the water, and that they lose their brilliancy as soon as they are taken out of their element: I observed, when the fishermen brought me any, that they here possessed more diversified forms, and more beautiful colours than those I had noticed elsewhere. I much regret having preserved none of these fish, but I had neither the bottles, nor the spirits of wine requisite for that purpose. It is considered to be very dangerous to eat the fish which frequent the coral beds; for several of them are said to be poisonous. During these excursions, I made an observation which I deem worthy of being recorded here. In lifting up some *madreporites*, which I generally found lying upwards, I noticed a glutinous matter upon the concave face, very similar in nature to that of the star fish, as its touch irritates the skin; I did not experience this feeling, however, on touching the convex part.

As I shall notice the trade of the Red Sea in another place, it is needless to mention that of

Jeddah here. I was detained at that port nearly two months, thanks to Mehemet Ismaël's duplicity ; he assured me that he had no business to transact there, and would be ready to sail in a few days. As his ship, from the circumstance of its being managed by an European, seemed as good as any other, I made my arrangements to go with him as far as Bombay. Consequently I could not take advantage of the steamer, the presence of which in those seas I was not at first aware of. Mehemet Ismaël's grand object had been to go to Mecca with his crew, and when all this was over, nothing prevented his departure. We then made the necessary preparations for the voyage ; the entire cargo of our vessel consisting of thirty young ostriches, which Malum Youssouf sent to India for sale.

CHAPTER V.

COAST OF ARABIA.

Departure for Bombay—Hodeida—The Coffee of Yemen—Mustapha Bey—Mocha—The Revolt of Turki-Bilmez—Arrival at Bombay.

I do not think we should ever have been able to reach Bombay, had we not, after Lieutenant Buckle's departure, fallen in with a "navigator" at Jeddah. The man Mehemet Ismaël thus engaged was an Irish Roman Catholic named Reynolds, who had come thither in care of a vessel from Bengal. He had, according to custom, quarrelled with his *nacoda*, and to my great joy we engaged him. I had, indeed, had ample time to make myself acquainted with Mehemet Ismaël's nautical acquirements, and confess that they caused me some uneasiness. With respect to the new comer, he appeared to know his own business very well; but not much relishing his habits, I placed my provisions under the hatches, so that we were consequently obliged to drink water. As will be seen hereafter, this precaution proved by no means useless. We got safely out of port, wind and sea being in our favour, but we made little progress the first day. At night, Mr. Reynolds betook himself to rest, leaving

Mehemet Ismaël and the gunner in charge of the ship. Every one knows how dangerous the coral banks are in the Red Sea; and in leaving Jeddah it is requisite to steer due west to avoid them. We had on board an excellent chart of that sea, laid down by order of the East India Company; and the way we had to steer had been so particularly pointed out to our *nacoda*, that he thought he could not be cautious enough, and so brought us much farther westward than was requisite.

When Mr. Reynolds resumed the command, he inquired of Mehemet Ismaël what our bearing was; the answer given was, as usual, a falsehood. He declared that the course of the ship had been changed at the time agreed upon, whilst in reality we had only began to steer southwards three hours later. In consequence of this first error, rendered still more embarrassing by the currents, the strength and direction of which are unknown out of the common track, we missed our longitude.

We were observing, two days afterwards, that the sea had lost something of its transparence, and that it bore along on its surface a great quantity of sea-weed, when a sailor, who was seated upon the bulwarks, suddenly exclaimed that he perceived rocks under the ship. Our alarm, it will easily be conceived, was as vivid as it was well founded, for we knew not whether to steer eastwards or westwards; at last, after a lengthy discussion, the *nacoda's* error was discovered. As he had never seen a single chart, he did not understand that any danger was to be apprehended on the African coast, and thought only of that on the Arabian shores. We consequently sailed

eastward, but not sufficiently so; for on the following day we were obliged to creep along the western side of the island of Tor, whereas our course lay on the opposite coast. This, however, enabled us to ascertain our exact position, about which we suffered much uneasiness.

No sooner had we regained a feeling of security, than one of those tragical events occurred, which can only remain unheeded and unpunished when they either happen on board vessels sailing under a barbarian flag, or that of the most powerful of all maritime nations. We had on board a Portuguese *cigoni* or steersman, above sixty years of age. Such sailors are not expected in India to go up into the rigging; they only assist in working the ship on deck. Either Mehemet Ismaël was not aware of this custom, or else he conceived that he was doing a pious act by ill-treating a Christian; so he ordered him to go up to one of the yards. The sailor refused, pleading his age and invariable usage as an excuse, which did not however prevent the *nacoda* from having him shamefully flogged. This had happened in the harbour of Jeddah when Lieutenant Buckle and I were on shore. In vain did the old man carry his complaint to Malum Youssouf; he was sent back, and could neither obtain leave to change his ship nor to go on shore. He was compelled to sail with us; and two days afterwards the poor fellow was found dead, having inflicted twenty-two wounds on himself with a razor in his despair. He would have been thrown overboard without further ceremony, had I not insisted that the occurrence should be noticed in the log-book. Now I can positively declare that whilst at Mocha,

the long-boat of the brig then cruizing off that port, visited us with two officers who examined the ship's papers, but without taking any note of that event. The unfortunate man's companions assured me that he had left a widow and four children at Bombay. His family was informed of his death, but the *nacoda's* conduct was never inquired into. It would indeed have required in this poor widow a good deal of boldness and no small amount of money to support her claim for justice.

However, this was not the only event that occurred to render the voyage disagreeable. Mehemet Ismaël sometimes affected to imitate Europeans, and on our arrival at Jeddah, endeavoured to introduce a discipline which his religion did not tolerate. He informed his Mahometan sailors, that he would not consent to their undertaking the journey to Arafat. They however left the ship without leave, and upon Malum Youssouf's request, the governor had them placed under arrest and punished. It was afterwards found necessary to come to an understanding, and they obtained what they wanted. As they were in a very great state of irritation against the *nacoda*, they abused him on the eve of departure, and would certainly have thrown him into the sea, had not succour been at hand. The most mutinous among them was placed in irons.

However Mehemet Ismaël was ill at ease; and notwithstanding the few arms on board were in the hands of the Portuguese, his prisoner professed little dread of him, and menaced him with the vengeance of the true believers. At last he made up his mind to get rid of him, and put him on shore at the first port at which we touched. When

Mr. Reynolds represented to him that he had no right to act thus, the *nacoda* flew into a rage, and, perhaps for the first time in his life, told the truth.

"What can I do?" cried he; "if that man is left on board at liberty, he will kill me; if I keep him in irons, the first cruizer will take charge of him, and I shall be hated by all Mahometans for having delivered up one of our creed to the infidels: I should lose my situation and be ruined. If a Christian were concerned, the case would be different; I could keep him in irons as long as I pleased. Let this man be set on shore, I will say that he has deserted, and there will be an end of the matter."

His prophecy was fulfilled: no inquiries were made at Mocha concerning either the true believer or the infidel. I beg all those who consider the English mode of governing, the *ne plus ultra* of human ingenuity, to take notice that there are a considerable number of vessels commanded by *nacodas* even more ignorant and fanatical than Mehemet Ismaël; that they also have Christian *cigonis;* that scenes of a similar nature must necessarily take place on board most of these ships; and that all of them hoist the flag of that nation, which claims superiority over all others for its morality and religious sentiments!

The prisoner was liberated at Hodeida, where we at length arrived, not without incurring the risk of running aground upon the island of Cameran, which we fortunately perceived in time, for we were steering straight for it. It was at Hodeida that we were to take in the first portion of our

cargo of coffee, and Mehemet Ismaël went ashore to receive the goods, leaving Mr. Reynolds in charge of the vessel. As we were to remain there a fortnight, I also disembarked, and a Polish doctor, to whom I had a letter of introduction, was kind enough to offer me hospitality. We had spent six days in coming from Jeddah, and the only remarkable thing I had noticed was the volcanic mountain which forms the island of Tor: we passed sufficiently close to enable me to satisfy myself as to its origin. I could not however distinguish whether its summit was serrated, owing to the position of the ship as we passed by. It is reported, I know not how truly, that smoke is sometimes observed escaping from it, and even that it has been seen in a state of ignition. At any rate, it is certain that the houses on the nearest point of the main land at which I touched, namely at Hodeida, are constructed of stones of volcanic origin.

Hodeida is rather a large town, surrounded by a high wall, containing spacious bazaars, solidly built houses, and appearing to carry on a considerable trade. It had been now for some time under the Pacha of Egypt, but it seemed as though he had not yet had time to seize upon its wealth, or rather perhaps it lies at too great a distance to accomplish this feat so easily. The town had previously been governed by its own Sheikhs indirectly, under the influence of the Imaum of Sanaa. If, as we may infer from the construction of the houses, the inhabitants found it necessary to shelter themselves from a *coup-de-main*, it is evident that no small number of them had discovered the means of acquiring great wealth. When I arrived,

the town was governed by Mustapha Bey, a distant relation of Mehemet Ali's, to whom he was indebted for his education. He was a young man of very agreeable exterior, who had associated much with Europeans, and was not unacquainted with our habits. His principal occupation was the collection of the dues at the Custom House, whither he went daily; and the purchasing of the portion of coffee reserved for the Pacha. The coffee, known under the name of Mocha, comes, according to Niebuhr, from the gardens which surround the town of Sanaa, situated in the mountains in the south-western part of Arabia. The nearest sea-port is Hodeida, to which place it is carried in the greatest quantities. Hodeida is only three days' journey from Sanaa; the caravans occupy fifteen in going from the latter town to Mocha.

Loheia, another town lying in a more northwardly direction on the coast of Arabia, also communicates directly with Sanaa, and is situated only eight days' journey from it; lastly, Beit-el Faquir, standing half-way between Hodeida and Mocha, also carries on a considerable trade, but is considered more as a sort of depôt. Europeans buy their coffee at Mocha; the Arab vessels, which carry it to India and to the Persian gulf, purchase it at Hodeida and Mocha; and that destined for Turkey and Egypt is taken up at Hodeida and Loheia. The very best quality, that for instance composed of small greenish beans, chosen after they are well dried, and presenting a smooth and shining surface, are found in the greatest abundance at Hodeida.

It was at Hodeida that I beheld for the first time the *banians* or merchants of India, who almost monopolise the trade of every place of importance here. They appeared to be numerous and powerful, even carried on a formidable rivalry with the Pacha of Egypt. They can only obtain permission to reside by paying a large sum to government. When this condition has been fulfilled they meet with no further interference, and may freely exercise their religion; they have even the privilege of burning their dead in a spot situated near the town. They have obtained the same favour at Mocha, on conditions nearly similar. It sometimes happens, when the fanaticism of the Mussulmans is excited, that they are insulted and run much danger; yet it is but just to observe, that the Arabs of the coast are more tolerant than those of the interior. It appears very strange to me that the British Government has not yet placed the *banians* of the Red Sea on the same footing with Europeans, and claim for them the same rights as it has done in the Persian Gulf.

I often visited the bazaars, but could not discover much speculation going on in anything but coffee. The environs of the town are not so barren as those of Jeddah, and there are in the neighbourhood some gardens planted with palm trees, and some few shrubs. We walked once or twice as far as the wells which furnish water to the town, and which are situated outside the walls. The country is not quite naked, but the soil is of so sandy a nature, that it cannot be supposed to yield a rich vegetation; its colour is of an ashy grey, and no stones are found in it.

There are two castles in the vicinity of the city, and the most important is certainly that situated near the wells. The soldiers of the Pacha were unable to take possession of the town until they had occupied this strong-hold. The whole country was kept in order by a handful of Egyptian soldiers, who were quartered even in the dwelling of the Governor, Mustapha Bey; they were commanded by an officer of the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. It did not appear to me that much attention was paid to their comforts, for whenever I visited the Governor, which I often did, I saw them asleep in the open air in the court. This however was not much inconvenience to them as most of the inhabitants sleep on their terraces.

An hospital for the sick had been established, but there were not many patients, although the heat was excessive. The doctor informed me that few diseases were known there; but that in case of need he had an ample supply of medicines. I must do Dr. Clot the justice to say, although I do not share the illusions, originating no doubt in his attachment to Mehemet Ali, that the medical department of which he is the head, is the only one that is as well organised as can be expected from a Mahometan government. Unquestionably, there are many things yet to be accomplished, but much zeal, patience and skill were required to obtain what now exists. By his services in Egypt, Dr. Clot is certainly intitled to a place among the greatest benefactors of mankind in our times.

Amongst the diseases prevalent in Arabia, there is one which I believe has never been mentioned, and for which no remedy has been discovered. It is

said that those who walk barefoot, the Egyptians especially, who are not very clever at discerning the difference in the quality of the ground upon which they tread, are often stung by an insect which leaves its sting in the wound. An ulcer forms in a few days, and keeps increasing, and penetrating deeper and deeper into the flesh, which it corrodes. Nothing can stop its progress, the limb becomes inflamed, then mortifies, and amputation is the only remedy. From this cause several soldiers were laid up in the hospitals of Jeddah and Hodeida.

We sailed from Hodeida nearly at the appointed time, and arrived at Mocha in two days. The voyage from the one to the other town is easy enough, the Arabian mountains never being lost sight of. We successively distinguished, on our way from Jeddah, the chain of Arafat, then that of Abou-Arish, and finally that of Sanaa. From this point, the elevation of the mountains gradually decreases to Babelmandel. We found a brig of the East India Company's service at anchor in the port, commanded by Captain Lowe, who, no doubt because it was the only ship of war there, had thought fit to hoist the St. George's flag, which he would not have ventured to do had any vessel of the royal navy been present. The captain as well as his officers lived on shore, and occupied the house of the former French agent. The town was governed by Emin Bey, a Circassian slave of Mehemet Ali's, and appeared to me to be similarly circumstanced with Hodeida.*

* I regret that I am unable to give any correct idea of the popu-

The same precautions had been observed in the construction of the houses, but it appeared to me that the commercial activity was not so great as in the last named place. Probably the political situation in which that country had been and still was, did not afford sufficient promise of security to merchants. During the three days we remained at Mocha, I stayed sometimes at the Governor's, sometimes at Sheikh Taïb's, the British agent, to whom I had been recommended. I saw nothing different outside the walls from what I had observed at Hodeida; the land was barren, but I noticed some extensive salt-works. The town moreover wore a more warlike appearance, and the soldiers seemed more numerous. Emin Bey was not entrusted like Mustapha Bey with commercial functions, neither did he meddle with the Customs nor coffee purchases. He acted as a real Governor, which probably was by no means to his taste, as he made less profit thereby. However, he was a very fit man, although possessing neither the elegant manners nor the polite address of Mustapha Bey. It is useless to say much concerning the troops I saw; they were, as everywhere else, ill-used and much dissatisfied. Wherever I had passed, both soldiers and subaltern officers besought me to give them an opportunity of escape, by taking them into my service. An officer of superior rank

lation of the Arabian towns; but, as I could no where discover a basis upon which to form a calculation, I was only able to judge from the activity of the bazaars. I shall therefore give, without attaching any importance to my estimate, five thousand souls to Kosseir, ten to Jeddah, without counting the pilgrims, twenty-five thousand to Hodeida, and twenty to Mocha.

begged the same favour here. I saw, at a later period, a good number of these soldiers arrive in Arabian vessels coming from the Red Sea, though the police used all its endeavours to prevent their escape.

Mehemet Ali possessed, as has been seen, every town of importance on the western coast of Arabia, and he had established one or two posts at the most frequented points of the African coast, where he levied certain duties. He was not, however, left in peaceable possession of his conquests. Not only, when in 1822 he sent his son Ibrahim at an enormous expense to reduce the Arabs of the interior, had these re-asserted their liberty immediately after his departure, but a rebellion had broken out not long before my arrival amongst his own troops. In 1833, an Aïta chief, known by the name of Turki Bilmez, because his pronunciation was so bad that no one could understand him, had corrupted a regiment and seized upon Jeddah, which he kept for a long period, and which was not retaken without great difficulty. He also took Hodeida and Mocha which the Arabs pillaged, when, conjointly with some of Mehemet Ali's ships, they drove out the insurgents; these sought refuge on board of British ships of war, and were taken by them to India and thence to Bassora.

The Asiatic policy of England is so little known in Europe, that it will no doubt create surprise when I assert that the revolt was instigated by that power. I however affirm this fact, further adding, that it does not deviate from the ordinary practices of the East India Company.

It would be indiscreet to bring forward all my

proofs; but I know Turki Bilmez, who was our Capitan Pacha at Bassora; I know Mehemet Effendi, his lieutenant, who commanded at Hodeida, for he was my travelling companion from Bassora to Muscat; and I know the Candiot, Ahmed Aga, who delivered up the ships he commanded for Mehemet Ali, for I induced M. Mimault to solicit his pardon. They all declared that they had been protected by England. None of them attributed this protection to humane motives, but to their having served, and promised to continue to serve, British interests.

It was also because European interests were concerned that the Arabs, who certainly bear no affection towards the Pacha of Egypt, took his part against the infidels. After the departure of Turki Bilmez, they soon showed that they had not acted from attachment, for they revolted immediately.

Whilst I was on the Arabian coast, it was quite impossible for any one in military uniform to travel from one town to another. When Ahmed Pacha was attempting in vain to reduce the various tribes in the Hedjas, and round about Mecca, his brother, Ibrahim Pacha, called "little Ibrahim," was making efforts equally futile in Yemen, round Mocha and Hodeida. During my residence at Hodeida, I much desired to visit Sanaa, but was unable to do so, although only three days' distant, and caravans of camels loaded with coffee were daily arriving. I should have been taken for one engaged in drilling the troops, and as such put to death. The Arabs are well acquainted with the dangers with which the domination of Mehemet Ali threatens them. He had observed that cultivation was di-

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minishing in Egypt for want of hands; that the negroes brought at a heavy expense from Africa died as soon as they were incorporated in the army; that the bullocks taken there were not worth the cost incurred by war. He knew the constitution and sobriety of the Arabs, whose existence in barren mountains is an incomprehensible problem, and hoped to make soldiers of them; these men being robust and at the same time cheaply maintained.

They could not, moreover, be deceived respecting his paternal intentions; for he had written them to his lieutenant, Ahmed Pacha, who made them public. Consequently, if the Arabs espoused the cause of Mehemet Ali, it was not from motives of attachment, but of religion. As for the motives that impelled the English to attempt the destruction of the authority of the Pacha in Arabia, they are simple enough, and were not without influence in the arrangements of 1840, although no one, it would seem, understood them.

The following is a sketch of the commerce of Western Arabia. In India, in Ceylon, and even in Java, every year, as soon as the south-west monsoon has ceased, vessels bound for the Red Sea are loaded with Bengal rice, sugar, indigo, cotton stuffs and a variety of other Indian or English goods. From the Persian Gulf are imported dates, corn, and Shiraz tobacco; from the coast of Africa, slaves, ostrich feathers, Abyssinian coffee, musk, gold dust, and also a great variety of drugs and gums; for Arabia, although represented as the mother of perfumes, being fertile only at Sanaa, and producing nothing but coffee, receives every thing else from

Africa. Egypt sends provisions and all kinds of stores. To India they export coffee and bullion; to the Persian Gulf, coffee and slaves; from the eastern to the western coast, and along the Arabian Gulf, glass ware, woven stuffs and hardware are sent. Coffee and the products of India are shipped to Egypt. Therefore, when the Pacha held sway on the coast, as he seized without payment on the produce of Egypt, he was enabled to send corn at a cheaper rate than even rice could be imported from India, the consumption of which was diminishing; his wretched manufactures furnished certain stuffs, which he forcibly substituted in lieu of English calicoes; he established heavier duties, and had reserved for himself one half of the coffee market, besides fixing its price. He evidently has injured the commerce of Great Britain, an injury which the government of that country never can forgive. In a case like this, that government itself has no need to interfere; for the Indian administration, which is independent, can easily obtain satisfaction without its aid. When the agent of another European power notices any measure detrimental to the interest of his nation, he cannot act himself, but must be content with writing. By chance, the minister at home may read his dispatch; by a more remote chance, that minister—nearly always new to the business of his own department; always vastly engaged with other affairs when he has the reputation of being a man of talent—*may* understand what has been written and call for another report. Then, the matter beginning to appear in a serious light, he will request his friends to make those inquiries which cannot be

pursued without creating some noise or bustle; discussions are raised, and the most simple and easy question thus becomes involved in inextricable difficulties. The English in India are less formal, and are certainly more shrewd; every one does his best in his own sphere, and the heads of departments do not pretend to be better informed than those who are on the spot. Thus for instance the superintendence of the Red Sea practically belonged to the commander of the East India Company's station. It would have been quite sufficient for him to have told Malum Youssouf at Jeddah, or Sheikh Taïb at Mocha, that Mehemet Ali's power was to be destroyed, to induce them to seek means to accomplish it; neither the one nor the other would have had any fear of being disavowed by their government. At the time I am speaking of Captain Dent was in command; I know that he wrote to Lord Palmerston respecting Turki Bilmez, not to ask for orders, but to inform his Lordship what he had done. It is from the political and commercial reasons which I have indicated, that England insisted that Mecca and Medina, solemnly called "the Holy cities," should be taken from the Pacha and restored to the Sultan, who is incapable of governing them. Anarchy has been consecrated by treaty in the Red Sea, to serve the interest of England.

All along the Arabian coast, I observed mountains which however did not descend to the shore. On the contrary, it appeared as if banks of *madreporite* and coral had risen out of the sea to form a border to it. This phenomenon cannot appear strange to those who have noticed the harbour of Kosseir, and more especially that of Jeddah. If, at

the latter place, the water should become shallower, it is evident that the reef which faces the town, and prevents vessels from sailing in a direct line into the harbour would belong to *terra firma*, to which indeed it is united during neap tides. At Hodeida, the sandy plain which forms the soil rests upon a bank of the same nature, as may be observed near the springs. As there are no rivers nor torrents, save in the mountains, it is difficult to ascertain to what formation they belong, but judging from their appearance they must be primary. I saw some basaltic and granite rocks at Jeddah, which were made use of in the construction of the houses. At Hodeida and Mocha, I observed only basalt, and sometimes beautiful pieces of *obsidian*. I sent several specimens of the rocks of these different localities to the Museum. As to vegetation, it was altogether deficient there.

I was so fortunate as to find a travelling companion at Mocha in Captain Melvill, who, arriving from London with dispatches from the Directors of the East India Company, had come from Suez in an Arabian vessel. He took his passage on board of the *Mahmoudiah*, on condition that that vessel should sail immediately. Mehemet Ismaël did not allow the opportunity to escape of telling an untruth, in affirming that I had paid two thousand francs to go to Bombay, although he had agreed with me for half that sum; and by this piece of cunning, he obtained that enormous price from his new passenger. However he did not dare to break his promise of starting at once, and we set sail in the afternoon appointed. Our first day was not a propitious one, and foreboded

no good for the future. As I have already stated, I had caused my provision of wine to be locked up, and the "navigator" had been deprived of it since our departure from Jeddah. We had been too much engaged the first two days after our arrival at Mocha to permit him to think of procuring any supply; but the third day, on the eve of starting, he went on board an American ship, the only vessel in port, with the intention of purchasing some wine or spirits. As they were rather short, he took a dozen bottles of brandy and quinquina, and as if to make up for lost time, he drank three of them ere we set sail. I do not know whether the alcohol or the bark acted most powerfully on him, but after having committed all sorts of extravagances, and having threatened Mehemed Ismaël that he would throw the bullion, which was locked up in his cabin, overboard, he at last went to sleep. He remained three days without coming on deck. When he made his appearance, we had taken the precaution of removing his quinquina, and although he was much ashamed of himself, he inquired of Mehemet Ismaël the situation of the ship. The latter pointed at random to the map, and upon this indication our "navigator" undertook to direct the ship's course. It was impossible to take our latitude, as we were advancing further into those parts where the monsoon is felt, and where clouds veil the sun. However, Mr. Reynolds contrived to lower the top-gallant masts, yards, and all the unnecessary sails and rigging—the top-sails, jibs, and lower sails being alone set; we thus were prepared to encounter the heavy sea which during the month of June, in the Indian Ocean, is so awful

during the south-western gales. These precautions once taken, although the navigation was very laborious, there was no danger as the ship was strong and well built. Nevertheless the waves were enormous, and of a length which I had not before witnessed; the rolling of the ship was very fatiguing. We had no other amusement but that of watching the flying-fish, for it was impossible to stand, and even very difficult to read.

The conversation I kept up with Captain Melvill amply compensated for this privation. He not only spoke French with fluency, but was a man of much knowledge and polished manners. He had always occupied important posts in India, where he is now one of the secretaries to the government. If he was not so much versed in Asiatic ways as I was, and did not so easily discover the untruths of our *nacoda*, he knew, on the other hand, much more of nautical matters, and perceived that we were near India, when it was thought that we were still far distant. He ordered the sounding line to be cast, and it was discovered that, owing to the erroneous information which Mehemet Ismaël had given to Mr. Reynolds, we were eighty miles nearer land than we imagined. We tacked and sailed northwards, and two days afterwards made the coast without exactly knowing our latitude.

One night when the wind had lulled, and the sea was more calm, Mr. Reynolds turned in, and Captain Melvill, who watched the ship's course, followed his example; I withdrew at a later hour, and Mehemet Ismaël was left alone. Alarmed at the vicinity of the coast, he got all cleared to cast

anchor. Not having gone to sleep, I went on deck to ascertain what was going on, and hastened to inform Captain Melvill, who had great difficulty to make the *nacoda* sensible of his imprudence. His interference proved fortunate, for towards break of day it came on to blow violently; and, had we been riding at anchor, we should inevitably have been driven on the coast. At last, after many dangers, we came within sight of Bombay, where we could not avoid being really angry, for our *nacoda* who would neither run in without a pilot, nor put the ship about to wait for one, was actually steering the vessel towards the rocks of the lighthouse. We in fact came so close, that two gun shots were fired to warn us of our danger. We packed the *nacoda* off into his cabin, and Mr. Reynolds took the vessel into the harbour.

Those alone who understand navigation can appreciate the dangers to which we were exposed through this Persian horse-dealer, recognised as an English captain. Owing to the admirable system which permits such transformations, this same individual afterwards lost, at this very point where the Bombay lighthouse is erected, another vessel called *The Two Brothers*, when part of the crew were drowned; and in consequence of the efficient discipline he contrived to maintain on board, he was the cause of another vessel, *The Mecca*, being burned.

CHAPTER VI.

BOMBAY.

Bombay—Jacquemont—Scientific labours—Situation of Persia in 1835—Ali Usta.

After having passed several months in such desolate countries as Egypt and Arabia, it is impossible to describe the delight experienced on beholding a town, European in its aspect, surrounded by handsome villas and embellished with a beautiful vegetation; where, too, numerous ships fill the harbour, and activity is manifested on all sides.

We did not however arrive at Bombay during the season when the island is seen under its most pleasing aspect; the heavy clouds which at that period darken the atmosphere, the enormous long waves of sombre hue which agitate its harbour gave it an appearance of gloom, to which however we paid little regard, so overjoyed were we at approaching a shore where civilisation reigned. As soon as we had penetrated sufficiently into the harbour to be sheltered from the heavy swell, we anchored; the pilot came on board, and in the interim we made our preparations for landing. Then, in order to avoid the bustle and be sooner disembarked, we got into the pilot

boat, which was waiting along side in order to make its report to the authorities.

These regulations are so well managed in India, and inconvenience passengers so little, that they do much credit to the government. No sooner is a sail discovered from the summit of the lighthouse, which commands a range of eighteen miles, than a signal is given which is instantly answered at all the stations. If the vessel continues her course, her direction is pointed out; if she approaches, her shape, flag, place of departure, and even her name is successively announced, if she is accustomed to frequent the port. These signals are usually made even before the pilot reaches the vessel, if there be an assortment of flags on board; if she has none, the pilot, who is always provided with them, hoists them as soon as he comes on deck. By this means, it matters not in what part of the island a merchant may be; he ascertains if a ship is coming to him, and can always reach his office in time to receive the captain and letters. The pilot writes down whatever he has transmitted by signals, in a book for that purpose, adds the names of the passengers, the length of the voyage, receives the letter bag and hands the whole over to the maritime authorities; meanwhile, he conducts the vessel to her anchorage. The authorities send the letters to the Post Office, where they are immediately distributed, and the particulars furnished by the pilot are posted up in the most public places. It often happens that the letters are delivered before the captain and the pilot set foot on shore.

I will here mention, by way of contrast, that

I happened to be recently in sight of Belle Isle, at the mouth of the Loire, near one of the richest towns in France; a pilot came on board with rueful face, and worked us up with difficulty as far as Saint Nazaire. No signal announced our arrival, which was only made known to the owner at Nantes by means of the post. It struck me, that some spars erected along the coast, a few yards of bunting, and the maintenance of some seven or eight men could not possibly entail an expense too heavy for such a city, in order to ascertain when any vessels were in sight. The same indifference exists at Marseilles; when a vessel is descried from Notre-Dame-de-la-Garde, some one runs off to the owner, and receives a gratuity of twenty francs; and this is all that is done for the communication of intelligence. But where is the signal book? Where are the signals made which ought to inform the public? When precautions which are at once so simple and so useful to trade, are neglected in a country — when they cannot naturally be established without hubbub, without the matter being laid before ministers, without its becoming the object of an endless correspondence between them—one is tempted to draw this conclusion, that there commerce is not held to be so much a necessity as a mere luxury.

The European inhabitants of Bombay take very little notice of vessels bearing Arabian names, and the *Mahmoudiah* stood very little chance of attracting their attention. Accordingly, Captain Melvill anticipated the pleasure of surprising his friends by his prompt arrival; and, although he had not taken advantage of the steamer, he carried

news from Europe only two months old; and, at that period, no one ever had made so short a passage. His first step sufficiently demonstrated the difference between English and French habits. Had one of our officers been charged with so important a mission as Captain Melvill, who carried orders to withdraw all the Company's funds, estimated at about sixteen millions sterling from China, he would unquestionably have reserved all his news for official ears; and the high functionaries who received it would without doubt have considered the character of their office compromised had they immediately divulged this intelligence. Such was not the case there; Captain Melvill confided his mission to no one, and left government at liberty to make it known if they chose; but he made a summary of all the news he had brought, and no sooner had he landed than he sent it to a journal, which distributed a supplement to its subscribers. No one dreamed of blaming him, or of accusing him of indiscretion; on the contrary, he was much lauded for informing the public of that which interested it.

Since my separation from Mr. Buckle, my English studies had been neglected, and Mr. Melvill spoke French too well to allow me to resume them in his company. Consequently I had arrived in a land where I could not make myself understood, and where every thing was strange to me. The great kindness of my travelling companion made up for that deficiency; he assured me that there would be no impropriety in presenting myself immediately, as is usual, to those merchants to whom I was recommended; and as soon as we had

landed, he made me get into a palanquin, and gave orders that I should be conducted to Messrs. Ritchie, Stuart and Co. The head of that firm received me with great kindness, and offered me all sorts of services imaginable." I shall say no more regarding him, and shall avoid as much as possible mentioning names; for I am fully aware that the delicacy of many persons is often as much offended by encomiums or public testimonies, as by attacks. I should, however, be void of feeling were I not to entertain a deep sense of gratitude for the numerous proofs of indulgence and kindness which I met with in India, and more especially at Bombay.

In the private intercourse which I was so fortunate as to keep up with the English in India, during a residence of several years, I always experienced the most noble and uncompromising hospitality elevated and generous sentiments, and always had occasion to admire their good faith, and the order and harmony which appeared to reign in their families. Not only did society in India appear to me not to rank below that of Europe, but I think an incontestable superiority might even be conceded to it. There is scarcely to be found in it a man who would not claim notice in the fashionable circles of Paris or London, either for the knowledge he has acquired in his long travels, or for the facility with which he speaks foreign languages. No lady can mix with it unless she has received an education at least as good as that of most ladies in Europe, and obtained a greater store of knowledge than those who never quit their country. In India there is more leisure as well as more wealth; the regularity of

life led there allows more time for study; the libraries are numerous, and no important work appears on the continent that is not to be found there a month afterwards. On taking up either a Calcutta publication, one from Madras, or especially one of Bombay, even a newspaper, a stranger cannot but feel a sort of humiliation. It is impossible not to remark the talent, the science, and above all the views of utility which have presided over the editorial department; you then involuntarily compare them with the trash, the useless verbosity, and the profound ignorance which characterise most European journals.

With regard to public affairs, although I was not accredited at Bombay, yet I sometimes found myself under the necessity of holding semi-official communications with the authorities, who always proved to be very obliging. I noticed the extreme simplicity of the forms, the great facilities granted to every one, and the promptitude with which business was expedited. I express these sentiments with the greater pleasure, especially as I was brought up differently from the English; as several of their habits were not agreeable to me; and as I was also frequently offended by some of their prejudices. With regard to the government, I do not admire all they do; I have sometimes found myself compelled to oppose their projects, and to baffle their intrigues. Unquestionably, a traveller is not bound to give a definitive judgment on all he observes; he must respect both the society which receives him and the government that protects him; unless, like the Mahometans, they have nothing worthy of respect. But it is his duty

to state the truth; and if I fulfil this task impartially—if I criticise sometimes as well as praise—I do not wish to be accused, either of being animated by a spirit of disparagement, or of yielding to a blind admiration, in consequence of what I have just stated.

There was but one hotel in Bombay, and I took a room there; but it was impossible to live otherwise than out in public, for the heat was intense in a closed apartment. Besides, all expenses were enormous, and I found it would be more convenient and economical to reside in the country. I was assisted in my endeavours, and at last I pitched upon a small house in one of the villages in the vicinity of Bombay. Had I been able to converse and visit the environs, this would have been a delightful retreat, but we were at the most violent period of the monsoon; as it rained in torrents, it was impossible to go out, except in a palanquin, and I was constrained to remain at home or at least to visit rarely. I occupied myself in arranging the collections which I had brought from the Red Sea and in studying English. Several persons had the kindness to invite me to see them; for, in gaining the protection of my correspondents, I had not lost that of Captain Melvill, who was residing with Mr. Sutherland, then representative of the absent Governor, and who died subsequently as Resident at Baroda.

However kind these invitations, they could hardly be very agreeable to me in the beginning; not only was I acquainted with but few persons, but I had lived too much amongst strangers not to know how annoying it is to converse with one

who speaks a language too imperfectly to comprehend immediately what is said, and to whom one is obliged to state the same idea in different ways before it is understood. This was what occurred to those who were kind enough to converse with me in English; and although I was grateful when they took this trouble, I felt mortified to cause them so much inconvenience. Although many Anglo-Indians have learned French, it seldom happens that any of them speak it fluently; those who were formerly masters of the language forgetting it from want of practice. There was thus every probability, if I was addressed in French, that the parts we enacted, though reversed, would not be more agreeable. Another reason perplexed me in English society: this was the extreme distrust which the French have excited, and which is expressed without reserve since the publication of Jacquemont's letters. I do not blame the friends of that traveller for having made them public; they have perhaps shown insincerity in allowing it to be said that they were not destined to see the light; whereas every one knows the contrary, and that several were inserted in the newspapers during the author's lifetime.

It seems to me that though there are more English in France than in India, enjoying a protection and a freedom there with which they appear to be satisfied, they do not scruple to attack its government and its institutions, and turn into ridicule its inhabitants and their usages. They are not blamed on this account by their countrymen: why then should they be indignant against Jacquemont, who certainly did not go the lengths they do? If he

has indulged in exaggeration and presumption, and not adhered too closely to truth, yet he has espoused the sentiments and the prejudices of his hosts, and by his abilities has rendered them popular in France. Far from having injured the interests of those who received him, he served them better than many of their most distinguished statesmen. His letters have given currency to an idea, respecting the power of Great Britain in India, which many persons consider exaggerated. This certainly should have excused certain sins against propriety. But besides the fact that in such cases English society is little inclined towards indulgence, Jacquemont's book became an instrument of party spirit. Lord William Bentinck was a decided Whig; and the principal organ of the Tories, the Quarterly Review, in order to attack him, seized upon certain passages in which the traveller had, it must be confessed, spoken very lightly of Lady Bentinck.

Lord William was not popular in India. Although people are too much occupied there with matters of utility to trouble themselves much about the questions which nourish party spirit in Europe, nevertheless, the majority of the inhabitants being Tories, certain innovations introduced by the Governor-General appeared to them premature. Too much attention was paid to his Lordship and Jacquemont's conduct, which all blamed, I think, more than was deserved. These feelings have not diminished, and many Frenchmen have told me long afterwards, that they did not meet with the reception in India which they anticipated, from the fear entertained in certain families that,

by admitting them on a footing of intimacy, they might incur the same annoyance which befel Lord Bentinck. It was asserted that her Ladyship, pestered by the jokes to which she gave rise in London, preferred expatriation and went to Paris, where she died ; the mere mention of Jacquemont's name, it is said, caused the Governor-General the most poignant displeasure. Had I been an ordinary traveller, I should probably have been less attentive to these incidents ; but I was going to reside, so to speak, on the Indian frontiers ; and it was requisite that I should inspire confidence amongst the inhabitants of the only civilised country with which I should be in communication. It was not without regret, therefore, that I discovered the existence of an unfortunate prejudice against the French which I could not easily destroy. The facility of expressing myself, and that feeling of confidence which gives free scope to the mind failed me, and without these, the choicest company loses its charm.

My house without doubt was a palace for one accustomed, as I had been, to the hovels of the East; but, for India, it was a wretched cottage, very small, ill-ventilated, enclosed by ruinous walls which were inhabited by serpents and lizards, filled with musquitoes, and where the rats at night performed the strangest feats ; furthermore, it had the disadvantage of being unhealthy, so that I was soon taken ill. One of my friends accordingly proposed that I should take up my quarters at his house at Mazegan, situated about three miles from the fort, and which was not only spacious, and fitted up with great luxury, but situated upon a hill, whence we could overlook the whole island,

and lose not a single breath of air. It is impossible to build houses in India as in Europe. Here we strive to keep out the cold by having rooms well closed and furnished; there, on the contrary, the object is to avoid the heat, and to obtain a free circulation of air. Therefore, houses are built as spacious, but at the same time as low as possible; it is found preferable to have the roof thatched with palm-tree leaves; divisions are avoided, and likewise all useless furniture and compartments. Instead of having thick walls for partitions, the apartments are separated by wood, and often merely by a simple screen. The house to which I now repaired was about eighty yards long; a gallery, or properly speaking, a sort of passage ran down the centre, the whole length of the building; at one extremity was a billiard-room, and the other formed a sort of dining-room, by placing beautiful screens across from one wall to another which were taken down after dinner. A library, a parlour and three bedrooms occupied the four corners, and were fitted with Persian blinds, through which the air circulated freely. The kitchen, the baths and the stables were in small, detached buildings; in front of the house was a grass-plot, and behind it a garden. Most of the Indian houses are built on a nearly similar plan, but differ of course in the degree of elegance displayed.

As I shall have to speak more at length of Bombay at a future time, I shall not now describe that town, which, during my first visit, I had neither the leisure nor the requisite facilities to examine. In fact, I waited only an opportunity for embarking in order to proceed to my destination, not fore-

seeing that the monsoon would keep me a prisoner there so long. I seldom went out, but, as my host possessed an excellent library, my time was not ill-employed. When the rain ceased at intervals, I saw splendid butterflies make their appearance in the garden, and formed collection of them. Several French vessels at length came into the port, when I had the pleasure of meeting with some of my countrymen. I had besides succeeded in making myself better understood, and was enabled to converse with many persons who favoured me with important information.

One of the most distinguished of these was Dr. Heddle, since snatched away in the very prime of life, and who was one of the brightest ornaments to science in the country. Like many of the Company's medical men, he had studied in France, and spoke our language fluently. The liberal manner in which our government diffuses superior instruction, and the facilities which Paris offers for initiating students into the science of medicine, at a comparatively small expense, are highly appreciated by foreigners. They are aware that such of their physicians as have studied in our schools are better acquainted than their brethren with anatomy, with the various branches of natural history, chemistry, and physics: they there obtain not only all that can be learnt from books, but also practical experience, and have free access to valuable collections. Dr. Heddle was especially distinguished for botany and chemistry. Government placed great confidence in him, and did not fail to consult him upon all measures which related to scientific matters.

Independently of his being secretary to the Geo-

graphical Society, he had the charge of receiving communications from all who had any thing to do with that department. Whenever government thought that no inconvenience could result therefrom, he laid the documents which he received from its agents before the society. Although the regulations of the Company are drawn up with the object of keeping its affairs as secret as possible, still in practice they are very liberal. Perhaps on careful examination, it might be found that the government of India, next to that of France, although it possesses but twelve ships of war, is the one which, without even excepting England, has rendered most services to geography and navigation in general. Moreover, its vast undertakings have been unostentatiously communicated to the public, and without that parade which appears to be no less dear to governments than to private individuals.

Dr. Heddle was often consulted on the studies requisite for such undertakings, and his apartment in the hospital, to which he was physician, was filled with maps and all sorts of collections. Admiral Malcolm also was assiduous in collecting scientific documents, and his high station enabled him to direct all kinds of researches. He was superintendent of the Indian navy, brother of the celebrated orientalist who had been Governor of Bombay, and of another admiral who had distinguished himself in the Mediterranean. I experienced great pleasure in communicating to him the few facts which I had been able to collect, and it delighted me still more to see the manner in which business was conducted under his orders. Sumptuous edifices do not seem to be required at

Bombay to carry out great things. On entering the arsenal, one is quite startled by the noise of braziers, blacksmiths, carpenters, and coal-heavers; and in the midst of all these noisy workmen stands the Navy Office. It resembles most of the houses of the country, and on the ground floor are the offices for transacting general business. A mean wooden staircase leads to the first floor; facing it is a room where the commanders of the ships of war in port assemble; on the right hand is the pay-office, and at the end, on the left, is the chart-room. On the opposite side there are other offices and a sail-store. That apartment which in Europe would be called the attic, is occupied by the superintendent and his assistants.

The charts of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, the elaborate surveys of the coast of India, those of the Gulf and the coasts of Arabia, part of Africa, Ceylon, the Maldives and Laccadives, and many parts of the Straits, have been prepared in this paltry house. When a portion is ready, it is sent to London, where the Court of Directors attends to the printing and publishing. The government of India has not less encouraged those who undertake travels by land, and has patronized their publications. They have shown themselves very liberal to those officers, who by their works have extended the domain of science. It is to this Board that we are indebted for the travels of Burnes, Captain Harris, and a host of other persons whom they have sent out, or permitted to travel in every direction. The credit of most of these undertakings is due in a great measure to Admiral Malcolm; in some cases those who exe-

cuted them were under his orders, in other instances they were set on foot by him as President of the Geographical Society.

If I took an interest in these matters, I did not neglect, on the other hand, to gain every information respecting the actual state of those countries which I was more especially instructed to observe. The old King of Persia was no more, and Russia had recognised his grandson as the legitimate successor to the throne. England did not delay following her example, and in order to retain her influence in Persia, not only afforded pecuniary assistance to the young King, but sent some of her officers to his aid. It was at this conjuncture that Persia first became indirectly tributary to the Czar. The ostentation which the Emperor of Russia displays in his efforts to maintain the principle of legitimacy, and the fear which he affects to entertain of liberal ideas, would be ridiculous indeed were they not political expedients. A sovereign whose father was assassinated, and who is surrounded by his murderers or their relatives, whose elevation to the throne was the result of a cabal, and whose family were upstarts, cannot appreciate or be acquainted with the importance of the word legitimacy. In a country, the inhabitants of which are more wretched than the slaves of our West India islands, the fear of liberalism cannot for a moment be entertained but by those who are destitute of ordinary intelligence. The defence of hereditary right, the destruction of revolutions, and the diplomatic notes to which they give rise, are merely pleas for meddling with European affairs, to which, were it not for these excuses, Russia

would be quite a stranger. As peace paralyzes her and war is her only element—and as the Emperor's vanity causes him, in imitation of his brother, to indulge in the hope that he may march in triumph to one of the capitals of Europe—legitimacy and revolution are the pretexts for sowing the seeds of discord between other powers. Such demonstrations have produced their effect in Persia.

The cabinet of St. Petersburg knows full well that conquests in that country, as in Turkey, are not worth what they cost; that it is far better to rule there by fear, and to allow the Persian government to administer the affairs of the country, than to do so itself. In recognizing Mehemet Shah, therefore, it acted very wisely, and rendered Persia a great service by preventing wars of succession. England acted through fear; she was jealous of the influence of Russia at Teheran. The Czar's Ambassadors did not treat hers with becoming deference, and looked upon them only in the light of envoys from a company of merchants. They even carried the slight so far, that, disdaining to write to them with their own hands, they deputed the task to their secretaries. In short, as I saw while M. Mazarowitch was *chargé d'affaires*, when also it became known at a later period after the publication of Count Simonich's notes, they made no great mystery of their threats or even of their proceedings towards India. England bore all with humility, and when the Emperor, without even consulting her, recognised the young monarch, she hastened to imitate his example and to advance the money which his *protégé* had need of. The new sovereign's adversaries having been de-

feated, the usual order of affairs was re-established; the Russian sresumed the part of counsellors—the English that of bankers.

The British Envoy however did not refrain from remonstrance, but the Persian reply was simple enough. "How can we," said they, "shake off Russian influence when we possess neither money nor the requisite troops? Give us the first and we will obtain the second." The money was advanced, but no one was in a hurry to raise troops. When it was desired to overthrow an important personage looked upon as hostile, money was again required. The Kaimacan was esteemed inimical to England, and he was so powerful, that it was considered to bethe duty of the King to destroy him and seize his property. The necessity of killing functionaries in a barbarous manner, and with *éclat*, can only be appreciated by those who are acquainted with the structure of Mahometan society. This unfortunate man was seized, thrown into a dungeon, the door of which was walled up, and he was there left to perish from starvation. The Persian authorities gave out that this act of domestic policy was committed to advance the interests of the English. At all events, it proved to be the forerunner, as I had predicted, of an enormous demand for money which was presented a few days later. Such was the state of things in Persia.

As to the southern provinces of Turkey, they had been desolated by plague and cholera, and were in as tranquil a state as could be expected in Arab countries governed by Turks. The so called reforms of the Sultan were unknown there, and no person was more certain of that fact than he

from whom I had my information, for this was the former Governor of Bassora. The causes that led to my meeting him at Bombay are too singular, and too strikingly illustrative of Oriental policy, and of that of the East India Company, for me to pass over them in silence.

Ali Agha, or Ali Usta, came from Constantinople, and in his youth had fought at Saint Jean D'Acre, and afterwards in the campaign against Russia in which he was taken prisoner. As he had served in the artillery, and knew how to discharge a cannon, the title of *usta*, or master, had been bestowed on him. He was exchanged when peace was made, had learned a few Russian words, and not being over scrupulous, had also acquired the art of drinking brandy, and was pretty well inoculated with European habits. He lived at Constantinople in that alternation between good and evil fortune which forms the very existence of Turks of his profession, until he found an opportunity of making an advantageous marriage. But the winds of adversity still set in against him, and one fine day he laid hands upon all his wife's property, repudiated her, and went to seek his fortune at Bagdad where Davoud Pacha was in want of artillerymen. When I passed through that town in 1824, I saw him there, but it seems the artillery had no longer any interest for him as he had already changed his vocation.

European workmen had come to offer their services to Davoud Pacha, and in order to imitate Mehemet Ali, he accepted them. Nevertheless he put little trust in them, and caused them to be strictly looked after. Ali Usta had credit for possessing, not only the strength of a lion, but the cunning of

the serpent; he had already, he said, pried into most of the secrets of the Franks during his captivity, and no one was better fitted to fill the post of inspector. Consequently, the newly arrived workmen were lodged at his house, and he became necessarily the intermediary agent betwixt them and the Pacha. I am not aware how long he held that office, but I know that he accumulated enough to purchase at a later period the post of Capitan Pacha at Bassora. There he had to superintend the river, and to keep the Arabs in subjection; he also commanded four or five pinnaces, and was the most important personage after the Mutselim, or Governor. To the latter he had to remit the revenues, but as he felt no inclination to do so, he one day embarked for Bushire, concealing his money in his sash, and begged his way through Persia until he arrived at Teheran. From thence he communicated with his master Davoud Pacha, denouncing the robberies committed by the Mutselim of Bassora, threatening to go to Constantinople and purchase his own pardon, and even to denounce Davoud himself if he did accept his proposals. The Mutselim was removed, and Ali Usta was re-installed in his former functions after having shared the Governor's spoils with Davoud Pacha. He returned to his post, and the plague and the cholera having visited the place, the new Governor fell a victim to it.

The scourge was making frightful ravages, but this did not prevent Ali Usta from seizing upon the reins of government. He feared neither the contagion nor any thing else; and no sooner was a person dead, or a house deserted, than without any ceremony he laid hands upon all that had been

left. This mode of proceeding, which he never failed to pursue, vastly increased his wealth; and as he was well known, few persons were inclined to attempt to deprive him of his government. The Pacha hearing that he was prospering, and anxious to have his share of the prize, applied in vain for the revenues of the country. After many useless negociations to obtain them, he was at last compelled to have recourse to main force. Ali Usta knew better than to wait for this; he embarked his wealth on board of the government vessels, repaired to Muscat, where he sold the fleet to the Imaum, then quietly went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and at last arrived at Alexandria. He was not without his misgivings, for he knew that Mehemet Ali had ways as certain as they were various for unburdening travellers who were too heavily laden.

Mehemet Ali about this time was in all but open hostility with the Sultan, and Ali Usta, rather heated with wine, made use of some imprudent expressions; he was accordingly denounced, and Mehemet Ali sent for him. The following dialogue, which took place between these two worthies, was communicated to me by Ali Usta.

"I entered," said Ali Usta, "and made my *teméné* (salutation)."

"'Ah!'" exclaimed Mehemet Ali; 'thou art welcome; be seated, and let a pipe and coffee be brought to the Hajji.'

"When I heard him ask for the pipe and coffee, I became alarmed—it bespoke treachery. I could not escape, but resolved to put on a bold countenance. The Pacha then added:

"'Hajji, confess that thy master Davoud Pacha

must be a great fool, for he cannot prevent the Arabs from robbing at the gates of Bagdad!'

"'Your Excellency must be aware, that it is not more difficult to prevent robberies from being committed at the gates of Bagdad than at those of Cairo.'

"On hearing this blunt repartee, Mehemet Ali replied:

"'Hajji, thou appearest to be a well informed man; art thou acquainted with the number of my troops, and those of our master the Sultan?'

"He then gazed out of the window. I suspected that he was giving orders, and seized that opportunity for making my escape. I took off my turban retaining only my cap, and succeeded in getting into the court of the palace without being recognized."

Ali Usta was not, as the reader may perceive, so easy to be bamboozled as a European, and well knew that he was a lost man if he repaired to his lodgings. According to the Turkish custom, he carried the best part of his wealth about his person; so, for the present, abandoning the remainder, he went in search of a vessel on the point of sailing; and, having found an Austrian ship ready to sail, he hastened to the Consul of that nation. He told him that he was an ignorant man, incapable of making an agreement; that he was aware of the confidence which might be placed in the representatives of European nations, and begged the Consul to arrange for his passage as he thought best. Proud of the opinion which a barbarian entertained of his integrity, the Consul undertook to do what was necessary, and assured Ali Usta that

he might go on board. Ali Usta was not a man to leave any thing which there was a possibility of saving in the clutches of Mehemet Ali. Consequently, after having been conducted on board by a Janissary belonging to the consulate, and finding himself protected by the Austrian flag, he requested his conductor to fetch his effects. The Janissary returned with them, and informed him that some of the Pacha's soldiers were waiting to seize him as soon as he should make his appearance.

On his arrival at Constantinople, his first care was, as he could not write, to dictate a most insulting letter to Mehemet Ali, informing him how he had escaped. This done, he turned his attention to the affair of the Pacha of Bagdad, denounced him as a thief and succeeded in exciting the cupidity of the Sader-azam, or Grand Vizier against him; he then spent amongst the members of the Divan the wealth he had brought with him, which he said was the property of the Porte. In short, he so managed as, notwithstanding the money which Davoud was distributing on his side, to get him dismissed, and Ali Riza, Pacha of Aleppo, sent to take his place, which he was far from coveting. Ali Usta accompanied the new Vizier as Capidji-bachi. As soon as Davoud was displaced, Ali pointed out those who had filled official situations at Bagdad or who possessed money. These were arrested, tortured, and some even put to death. The work of spoliation ended, Ali Usta expected to receive the price of his services, and asked for the government of Bassora. His previous conduct had inspired little confidence in the Pacha, and it was feared he would again take to flight, when he cunningly contrived

to make British influence serviceable in facilitating his nomination. The same Jew, who was the Resident's banker, also became Ali Usta's; and this banker, aided by the Resident's agent at Bassora, was to receive the revenues of that town and remit them to Bagdad to be handed over to the Pacha. It turned out, however, that the revenues never reached the Pacha, owing most probably to the reluctance felt by Ali Usta in refunding. At last, annoyed at receiving nothing, and after an impertinent letter had been addressed to him by the Mutselim — too gross for translation — the Pacha appointed a successor, and gave orders that Ali Usta should be put to death. But the Mutselim was too wary: by the aid of a Persian merchant, he had a hired *baglo;* he had dispatched others laden with dates to be sold on his account; he had spiked all the cannon in the fort and damped the powder, so that when his successor arrived, he quietly embarked with his servants. The wind being contrary, he remained three days in the river; and when he set sail fired two shots into the town.

When off Bushire, he put the Persian merchant into a boat upon pretence of sending him ashore for intelligence, and continued his route seizing all that he had left on board. At last he arrived at Bombay, and, uncertain whether he might not be given up, he at first took up his quarters in a wretched house, where he could only get into his room by means of a rope. Notwithstanding the representations of the Resident, the authorities of Bombay refused to interfere in the matter. Ali Usta then made himself easy, took a handsome mansion and

made a great show. He was very much perplexed how to get back to Constantinople in order to serve Ali Pacha in the same manner as his predecessor. He could hardly expect to escape a second time from the Persians of Bushire or from the Pacha of Egypt; and, as I was the only European who spoke his language, he often consulted me on this head. I advised him to take his passage for London, and thence proceed to Constantinople, and he followed this course. I even gave him a letter to our Ambassador, who in all probability had the honour of an interview with this extraordinary personage.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Departure from Bombay—Slave trade at Bombay and in the neighbouring seas—Bender Abbaz—Ormuz—Bender Bushire.

On my departure from India for the Persian Gulf, I once more embarked on board of the *Mahmoudiah*, that being the first ship bound thither after the monsoon. This time however she was not under the command of Mehemet Ismaël. Although freighted by the same Persian merchant who had recommended that *nacoda* as an experienced seaman, the trader knew perfectly well what opinion to form of his *protégé*, and was most unwilling himself to trust his merchandize to his care. Consequently he stipulated that a European should command her, and the English firm engaged Captain Mac Intyre for that purpose. I made all my arrangements with him, and our departure was fixed for the 1st of November, 1835.

My friend Ali Usta furnished me with letters of recommendation, and initiated me tolerably into all the affairs of the Gulf; he did not fail to invite

us to breakfast the day of our departure, which had well nigh been retarded by a singular event.

An American ship of war, proceeding on a cruize in the Indian Seas, had grounded on a little island near Muscat, and it was found necessary to have her damages repaired in the dockyards of Bombay. This was not easily accomplished. There were five hundred men on board, and it was difficult to find lodgings for them. If on the one hand, the Indian government was disposed to be obliging, it must be confessed that the Americans, who had just then obtained the five-and-twenty millions of francs which they claimed from France, were more arrogant than usual and not easily satisfied. An offer was made to put the American sailors on board the Company's ship, the Hastings, which was not armed; but the American commander having intimated that he should hoist the flag of the Union on board of her, this proposal was not acceded to. I do not know what sort of an understanding they had at last come to, but, on the day of our departure, I found, on coming into the town, the streets filled with sailors. The crowd rushed into the public-houses, and towards noon quarrels had taken place in various quarters. The police, chiefly composed of Indians, who feared to attack white people then interfered, but the Americans drove them off, and were for a time masters of the town. All the inhabitants fled before them, and we had considerable difficulty in leaving Ali Usta's house and reaching the quay.

As the ship had been freighted by Persians, it was of course to be expected that some roguery

would be practised. I stipulated that I should have a stern cabin, and when I came on board I found none to be had. The merchant who freighted the vessel had allowed Captain Mac Intyre to engage it; and on the eve of departure he sent his uncle to install himself in the cabin destined for me. I did not suffer much from this inconvenience, for the Captain gave me half of his own room; and as he was very obliging, very active, and well versed in his profession, and we had besides very favourable weather, our voyage on the whole was a delightful one. He had two officers under him, and the passengers consisted of the merchant's uncle, some Persians, and two young Abyssinians. On inquiring into the story of the latter, I learned that they were blacks purchased at Bombay from the ships which come from the coast of Africa, and which never fail to bring some of them. They are landed in palanquins, and are passed off for women, and the people of the custom-house by means of a gratuity are induced to allow them to pass as such; if they are of a certain age, they are said to be sailors or servants, and are sold or purchased without much difficulty. A good many of them are even sent into the country. Those on board our vessel were intended as a present from the owner to a Persian Prince; he had purchased them for that purpose, and they were, as I have shown, carried on board of a vessel protected by the British flag and commanded by a British subject. As some of the facts connected with the slave trade have already been published to the world in a very incorrect manner, I think

it my duty to state all I know relating to that traffic in India, and on board British ships.

The treaty on the right of search had been signed previously to my departure from France; and although it could not be denied that it was contrary to our traditionary policy, and opposed to a principle for which we had struggled for fifty years, and which had given rise to the famous armed neutrality, I confess that it did not strike me as being very grievous. In point of fact, the principle of the flag covering the goods was only abandoned in certain cases for a specific object, and reciprocity was stipulated. But I should have thought it necessary for that government, which had more especially insisted on obtaining it, to adopt measures to prevent the trade from being carried on beneath its own flag. I therefore formally gave information that the *Mahmoudiah*, commanded by an English captain, had transported slaves from India to Bushire. I also communicated my observations upon the trade carried on at Bombay and in the Persian Gulf, both in Arabian vessels and in those protected by the British flag. My letters, as it may be presumed, were destined only to furnish information to the government, and all that I could do was to point out the means of putting a stop to such manifest violations of the treaty. Count Molé was minister at that time, and my observations produced some effect, as I afterwards found on my return to Bombay in the beginning of 1838.

I received from Captain Laplace, who commanded the *Artemise*, a letter in which he informed me that my notes had been communicated

to him, and that he was ordered to make inquiries on the subject. This officer assured me that he had not come to the same conclusions as myself; he believed that the British government showed much zeal in suppressing the trade, and cited as an example the case of a captain in the East India Company's naval service who had been condemned to transportation in consequence of his having purchased negroes. I am well aware that our officers, obliged to make reports concerning countries at which they can only glance, incur the risk of deceiving themselves, and have no means of rectifying what they hear. But I was extremely surprised that a man of Captain Laplace's experience, who knew but a few words of English, and nothing of the language of the country, should consider himself to be acquainted with what was passing better than I who had resided in it for many years. Moreover, I was by no means flattered that government should doubt the truth of the facts which I had communicated, and I awaited a favourable moment for proving what I had advanced. Before stating in what manner the opportunity presented itself, I shall narrate the history of the officer whom Captain Laplace believed to have been transported.

Captain Hawkins is one of the most honourable men in the East India Company's navy, and the judgment which was given against him has not caused him to lose either his friends or the public esteem. He had executed his orders, and nobly allowed himself to be condemned in order that he might not accuse his superiors. Despatched to the coast of Africa, it was his duty, according to

his instructions, to procure there the men requisite to complete his crew, and these he had to buy. On his return to Bombay one of those accusations, which beneath the cloak of justice often conceal the vengeance of party, was launched against him. He was brought before the Supreme Court, tried and condemned. No doubt every body knew that he had not bought the negroes either for himself or with the intention of selling them; nevertheless he was sentenced to transportation. The judgment of the Court was carried into effect in the following manner. Captain Hawkins proceeded as passenger on board of a ship of war; he messed with the captain, and even a favourite horse of his was embarked on the same ship. Arrived off Singapore, under the pretence of having important dispatches, the captain who commanded the Company's ship, instead of taking his prisoner to New Holland, conveyed him to London. On his arrival, he was received extremely well by the Directors, and immediately obtained the Royal pardon. He was then sent back to India with dispatches, returning to Bombay by way of Constantinople. He afterwards commanded a vessel in the Persian Gulf, where Captain Laplace might have met with him; and as he himself related to me this strange farce, I can positively affirm that he had no idea of his having been a victim to the severity of his government in the matter of the slave trade.

At a later period, towards the close of 1838, the *Prévoyante*, a French corvette commanded by Captain Guillain, arrived at Bombay. She formed part of the naval force on the Bourbon

station, and her commander had been furnished with the necessary documents which authorized him to search foreign vessels suspected of carrying on the slave trade. As Captain Guillain was qualified to see that the treaty was carried into execution, I hesitated not at his request to inform him what a slight degree of regard was paid to it in India. I explained to him in what manner African slaves were disembarked and sold in the very town. I pointed some out to him at my own door, informed him that he would find more in the harbour as well on board of Arabian as British vessels; and I further stated the manner in which this trade was carried on in the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Not only was it my wish that the information I furnished should be so authentic as to enlighten the government completely, but I did not choose to think it necessary that French agents should seem to gain intelligence by stealth.

I believed that the British authorities could not disapprove of our taking an interest in a cause which has become the object of a treaty between the two nations. It was therefore with my consent that Captain Guillain communicated my letter to the Governor, Mr. Farish, who was too honourable a man to deny facts which were known to every one and contested by none. As soon as the *Prévoyante* returned to Bourbon, her commander made his report to Admiral de Hell, who transmitted it to the Minister of Marine. On my part, I had communicated all this to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who blamed my interference. I thought to justify myself sufficiently by observing, that if such investigations had not been re-

quired, the simplest way to prevent them would have been to abstain from communicating what I had written to Captain Laplace, or at least to have left me in ignorance that this had been done. It was clearly incumbent on me to prove the truth of what I had stated, especially as the veracity of my statements had been questioned.

If, after having visited slave colonies, I have become the partizan of emancipation, still I do not believe that any great service has been rendered to humanity or to civilization by suppressing that trade. Many persons, whose experience and good faith cannot be doubted, are of opinion that it would have been wiser to have placed it under control. They say, and it appears to me not without some reason, that negroes would be the gainers were they transported from their own country to a colony, if the laws insured to them a better treatment there than they now experience. I am also convinced that the blacks are much happier in the East than in their own country. I am therefore far from wishing to see government put itself to any expense to suppress the trade. At any rate, I can safely say that were it to make any demonstrations to that effect, conformably with the treaties, the English would soon be forced to propose that they should be broken. If two ships of war were sent, the one to Babelmandel, the other to Muscat, with instructions to visit all the vessels which enter or set sail, I affirm that they would take a good number of prizes which the British tribunals would themselves condemn as carrying the British flag, contrary to the navigation act. If my memory be not faithful enough to enable me to state the names of those vessels

which come under this category, they will be found in the Indian newspapers which often animadvert upon the matter.

The government of India is as well acquainted with this as with the existence of the trade, and I have a letter in my possession from one of the principal naval authorities in that country acknowledging it. On the other hand, instead of giving timid orders and sending as cruizers vessels which are known to be incapable of overtaking any thing, in those parts where the right of search is tolerated, let the treaty be strictly enforced, and it will presently be seen which of the two, the English or the French, will be soonest tired of it. I had the honour, in 1842, to write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, pointing out to his Excellency the first expedient; with regard to the second, it originated in the treaty of 1833. Admiral de Rigny, who was then Minister, assured me himself that he did not intend that it should be executed in such a manner as to prove vexatious to French navigators, whilst in practice it was to be lenient to the English.

After a delightful passage of eight days, we arrived close to the high mountains which, on the Persian side, indicate the entrance of the Gulf. We were, however, becalmed in the Straits, and should have made no head-way had we not been aided by the tide which rises to a great height in those seas. Vessels are easily worked in these Straits, for the mountains descend rather abruptly into the sea, and there are no shoals or rocks. We were astonished at seeing so many sharks, and could not at first make out why they should assemble

there in such numbers. I imagined that I had discovered the reason when I passed that way a second time. I then observed that the sea was tinted with a reddish hue, occasioned by the fish-spawn which floated on its surface, and which seemed to be held together as if by gelatinous threads. These threads were parallel in a perpendicular direction to the shore, and the red eggs connected with them were seen from the surface of the water to the depth of about a foot.

As these Straits are not exposed to the *shemal*, or regular north-west wind, which prevails in the Gulf, nor to the south-west and north-east monsoons, the calmness that reigns there entices the fish to deposit their spawn in that spot. It is consequently to be found in great abundance, and the ancients were no doubt aware of this fact, as they called the inhabitants of that coast Ichthyophagi. This accounts too for the presence of the sharks, which in so limited a space find abundance of prey. At night we beheld long, luminous furrows, which indicated the motions of these monsters round the ship. At one time we counted twelve of them, and it was easy to ascertain their size by the radiancy which they shed around them. I never saw the sea so phosphorescent, not even in the regions of the trade winds, so celebrated for this phenomenon; our ship indeed appeared to be on fire, and the flame which seemed to issue from the rudder extended to an immense distance.

We arrived at last at Bender Abbaz, where our merchant quitted us in order to proceed at once to Shiraz, leaving on board his goods and slaves.

We remained four days in the road, which is rendered very unsafe in consequence of the force of the tide, which when the wind blows with violence in the same direction, forces ships from their anchors and sometimes drives them ashore on the Island of Ormuz or even on the coast. I landed at Bender Abbaz in order to despatch a letter to the Imaum of Muscat. I had been led to hope that we should put into that place; but to my great vexation, the Persian merchant, regardless of his promises, did not think proper to do so. It is well known that Bender Abbaz was an important mart when the Portuguese occupied Ormuz, which is opposite to it. No vestiges of its splendour now remain. It is a wretched place, dependent upon the Imaum of Muscat, although belonging in reality to Persia. He has rented it, as well as all the coast and a great portion of the islands, and established Governors there. I delivered the letter I had for the Imaum to the Governor of Bender Abbaz, who was a handsome and polite young man of the Imaum's Arab tribe.

The town is built in the Arab fashion, and during summer the heat is so oppressive, and the fevers which follow are so dangerous, that it is only inhabited during winter. At this season, it is the regular port for the landing of the goods destined for Yezd, Kerman, Shiraz, and Ispahan; but it frequently happens that rebels and marauders put a stop to all intercourse with the interior, and in that case the traffic is carried on by sea to Bushire. There are still to be seen in the town ruins which indicate where once stood the Residencies of different nations when the prosperity of Ormuz gave

importance to Bender Abbaz. This town carries on a great trade in fish, which are caught in the Gulf. Its vessels carry salt, fruit, and sulphur, brought from the mountains situated at a little distance in the interior to Muscat. The cold season had set in at the time I was there, and the inhabitants had therefore returned. From what I could see in the bazaars, their ordinary food was dried fish, dates, and rice.

Ormuz is an island rendered interesting only by its political history. The Portuguese took possession of it in 1514, and kept it until 1622, when the English and Persians drove them away. It had attained a high degree of prosperity, but I have my doubts whether the accounts we have are not very much exaggerated. I visited it during our sojourn at Bender Abbaz and observed that the ancient buildings, the ruins of which still plainly mark the plan, were similar to the small houses of the Portuguese at Bombay and far inferior to those at Goa. I accordingly admit, with due caution, Tavernier's assertion, who says that the owners pretended that they could have built them of gold. My principal motive in visiting Ormuz was to verify what well informed persons had related to me concerning it. Dr. Mac Neil had made a drawing of it and stated, when he showed it to me, that he believed this island was of volcanic origin. Dr. Heddle entertained the same opinion, and its general aspect appeared to confirm their notions. I landed in a small creek about a mile from the town, and here I noticed huge blocks of freestone of a coarse grain on a sand-bank; then the same stone mixed with shells in layers, red sandstone and a secondary calcareous formation, between the layers

of which were beds of black *mica*, so celebrated in commerce.

When the Portuguese monopolised the commerce of this portion of the globe, the goods which they dealt in were sold by invoice, and in order to make them appear genuine, they took care to sprinkle this *mica*, which was then found only at Ormuz, over the ink. Beyond the calcareous stone, I found schistous stones loaded with a great quantity of oxide of iron, which imparts to the mass of the mountains a dark reddish hue, similar to volcanic rocks. I then searched in a torrent which descended from the highest parts of the mountains, and discovered no volcanic substances, but merely rounded fragments of gneiss and granite. I do not think that muriate of soda is to be found in soils of igneous origin, but it exists at Ormuz. Whilst approaching the town, I followed the windings of a brook, and in the valley which it watered several divisions similar to those in rice-fields had been made. The waters which descended from the mountains were gathered there, and as soon as evaporation took place, a large quantity of salt was produced, which was an article of a considerable trade. I collected a few specimens of the rocks and sent them to Calcutta in order that more enlightened persons might decide as to the origin of the island. Unfortunately, the celebrated Mr. Prinsep, to whom I had sent them, fell ill and shortly afterwards went to England where he died.

I observed a mollusca which is classed amongst the corals; it was alive, partly sunk in the sand, and attached by a peduncle to a rock; when touched, it threw out water from the upper surface

like a sponge when squeezed; it is of a white colour, and is to be found in a fossil state in the neighbourhood. Another mollusca of the same kind, and also attached to the ground, spreads itself on the sand and takes a circular form; it is of a bluish green colour, and is intersected by a red line. It throws up a great quantity of water as soon as any one attempts to touch it, and works its way into the sand, whence it is with difficulty withdrawn.

I could not perceive, in going from the harbour to the town, the slightest trace of vegetation. The town itself is nearly deserted, and is only inhabited by fishermen, who collect together in the old Portuguese fort. This fort is very elevated, furnished with a few bad cannon, and surrounded with a moat. Europeans might defend themselves there against the combined forces of Persia and Arabia. The chief of the country, a brother of the Sheikh of Bender Abbaz, rather a good looking young man, was said to be associated with the pirates of the Gulf. I had the honour of being received by him under a shed, and of delivering into his hands a letter from his brother, which procured me a cup of coffee. I asked him a good many questions, but he did not appear disposed to reply to them; however he informed me that there was a village in the middle of the island which was very naked and barren, and that its inhabitants were employed in extracting salt from the mines there. Had I not known that Arabs find the means of living somehow on the rocks of their country, I might perhaps have doubted the Sheikh's assertion; but I discovered that the industry and sobriety of

these people are beyond conception. The trade of Ormuz is now confined to salt and dried fish. At the bottom of the bay, an enormous white rock, of a regular shape, is perceptible; it is an object of veneration with the Hindoos, who go thither on pilgrimage. I am unacquainted with the origin of this custom, and merely mention it on account of its being one of the few links between two nations who differ so widely as the Persians and the natives of India.

Our voyage from Bender Abbaz to Bushire was very slow, occupying ten days. I had previously had the honour of seeing Major Morrison, the East India Company's Resident at Bushire, during my sojourn at Bombay. He was of a philosophic turn of mind, and little disposed to adopt the prejudices so dear to most Englishmen. He was kind enough to ask me to take up my quarters with him, as his predecessor, Colonel Stannus, had done some years previously. The Major had only lately been installed in his office, and did not yet display the luxury which I had formerly noticed there; yet I could not help at once observing how the English had gradually increased their influence in that country.

When General Malcolm came for the first time to confirm connexions with Persia, which however up to that period had never been interrupted, he appointed as agent at Bushire a native of the country, whose principal care was to provision the trading vessels of the East India Company. At a later period, this agent was replaced by a mulatto, who gained such a footing as led to the appointment of a Resident. At last, the Resident of Bushire became

the Resident of the Persian Gulf; and I will explain how far his authority extended. A guard of sepoys was given to him; these, during my first visit, were quartered in the Resident's dwelling, which was humble enough and badly constructed. On my visiting it a second time, I found that the ground round about it had been cleared; that thicker walls flanked with towers had been erected; and that the sepoys were more numerous, and were encamped upon an open space around the flag. Some pieces of artillery which had been brought thither upon the pretext of selling them to the Persian government were to be seen under a shed. A flag-staff had been erected over an apartment which was more elevated than any other in the town, and communicated by signals with the vessels in the road. In short, not only was the Residency secured from a *coup-de-main*, but such unskilful soldiers as the Persians could not have taken it by force; they must have laid siege to it, and as it was close to the sea-shore, assistance could have been sent from India in time to succour the place.

All these innovations, comprising a complete military establishment, a Resident more powerful than the Governor, and a Residency-house stronger than the town, had been introduced in the midst of an uninterrupted peace of thirty years, without treaties, without conventions, without the Resident having been accredited to the Persian government, and without his having been always officially recognized by his own government. It was not so when, during the oscillations of British policy with Persia, it happened that the Minister sent to that court was appointed by the King. In fact, the Resident was dependent only upon the Company, and was not under the orders of

the embassy of Teheran. The first British agent had, instead of salary, a commission upon all he furnished; the second two hundred and forty pounds per annum. The last received four thousand pounds annually, and considerable privileges were granted to him. His assistant was paid sixteen hundred pounds; and his physician, a thousand a year. Our ministry proposed to place beside these gentlemen an agent, who was to have been most generously remunerated with a salary of two hundred and forty pounds a year! I had great trouble to prevent this piece of extravagance.

The British naval station was commanded by Commodore Pepper, who happened to be at Bushire when I arrived there, but whose head-quarters were at Bassadour on the island of Kechem. No one is more convinced than I am of the important services which the Indian navy renders in those seas, which without its aid would be inaccessible in consequence of the pirates; notwithstanding indeed its vigilance, it is very difficult to suppress this evil altogether. Quite recently, during my residence at Bombay, a beautiful sloop, the *Elphinstone*, was attacked in open day by two Arab *bagloes*, which she succeeded in taking and bringing into port. Nevertheless, it is not the less true that, to maintain order, the English are in the habit of daily violating the rights of nations by arrogating to themselves that which does not belong to them. When the wars of the Republic and of the Empire absorbed the attention of Europe, the English, unmolested in their island, excited without any hazard to themselves, the several powers against

France, lavishing for that purpose a portion of their immense wealth. Meanwhile they were busily establishing themselves in all the other quarters of the globe. The East India Company had full leisure to extend its sway in Hindostan, to crush its enemies, and finally to become the ruling power there. This, however, could not be effected in a day, and it was not till the year 1818 that it was firmly established on the western coast, after having defeated and subjected the Mahrattas. It is very probable that the Company would not have troubled itself about Persia before that time, had not the campaign of Egypt on the one hand, and at a later period, our embassy to Teheran, on the other, excited uneasiness. The threats of France did not then possess that ridiculous character which has since been imparted to them; and their execution would not have been so difficult as was represented. Anxious to guard all the avenues by which it might be attacked, the Company amongst other things entered into a treaty with Persia, engaging to protect the Persian trade, and for that purpose to keep a cruizer in the Gulf. This certainly could not be supposed to mean that it was to establish itself on the Persian territory, and dictate laws to the neighbouring nations.

The following is the process by which this object was gradually attained. The English had found a convenient anchorage off Bassadour; as the island was very poor and thinly peopled, they were received with open arms by the inhabitants. They resided there for some time, built dwellings, erected warehouses, and finally hoisted their flag in the isle. Meanwhile Russia was looking

on with her wonted jealousy, and M. Mazarowitch, the Chargé d'Affaires of that power, protested against these infringements. Feth-Ali-Shah accordingly sent an officer to command the English to withdraw; but he entrusted the orders of the King to one of their friends, who perhaps never transmitted them, or who at any rate returned with the news that they had been obeyed, which was not the case. In order to avoid such disputes for the future, it was arranged that the right of residence should be held from the Imaum of Muscat. The Imaum, having rented from the King the coast and the Persian islands, gave to the British the power of establishing themselves there, and, as he troubled himself very little about the Russians, or even about the King of Persia, his friends were relieved from further uneasiness. The Imaum conceded part of the territory to them, and the inhabitants became subject to the English laws; the British flag waved there, and the very things which Mahometans most abominate are every where to be seen, Mussulman women of bad repute walking without their veils, and hogs grunting about the streets.

The tribes of the coast of Arabia and its islands depend on chiefs who are frequently in a state of hostility, and the English policy has on no occasion tended to unite them under one form of government. So far from this, during my residence at Bassora, I frequently had to make complaints that the British agents treated the Sheikhs, functionaries of the Porte and residing in its domains, as if they were independent. By adopting this policy, if the chiefs of the Gulf were engaged in naval strife, it was very

easy to look upon the men of either party as pirates, and thus make the balance turn to which ever side they wished. The *Elphinstone*, of which I have spoken above, acted in this way; and the Supreme Court of Bombay looked on the matter in that light by declaring itself incompetent to condemn the assailants. Now, from this exercise of power arose a custom which they seem to consider as a privilege or a right, but which, however, ought not to be admitted. Before coming to blows, the hostile tribes asked permission of the Resident; he inquired into the motives, and granted leave or refused at his pleasure. Thus it happened that a dispute arose between two tribes who were interested in the pearl fishery of Bahrein, and leave to fight it out was not granted till after the close of the fishery. Whilst I was at Bushire, the Imaum of Muscat wrote to Major Morrison to obtain his permission to attack Bahrein. This omnipotence is evidently merely the result of intrigues carried on with extraordinary perseverance, and it would cease if treaties were conformed to. All the islands in the Gulf are recognised as belonging to the King of Persia; if the people choose to fight with one another, or require leave to do so, they ought to apply to the King; if he be not powerful enough to make himself respected, his allies, the English, can furnish him with the necessary means.

The case is quite similar in Arabia. With the exception of the Imaums of Muscat and Sanaa, all the chiefs are under the domination of the Porte or its delegates; consequently, it is to the Porte that they should refer their affairs. When France had occa-

sion to complain of Algiers, she in the first place made representations at Constantinople, and only took her own part when she saw the impossibility of obtaining justice. Even Russia, whose ambition is called in question, does not act directly upon the Turkish provinces; she never fires a gun without having previously given due warning to the Divan. Nevertheless, expressions of surprise are uttered almost every day against France or Russia, whereas not a word is said about the proceedings of England, which, as I have shown, are decidedly contrary to the law of nations. These acts are not the more excusable, because they occur in remote countries; were any other European government to conduct itself in a similar manner, no matter in what part of the globe, England would speedily find an excuse for interfering and protesting against the act.

I cannot speak of Bushire without mentioning an individual, who, if he has not rendered himself celebrated, has nevertheless caused a vast deal of trouble in the countries in which I resided. There lived at Bushire an Armenian business agent, whose name was Codja Mallallah, called by the English Mr. Satour; his house was a very pleasant one, and I was fond of visiting there. Both he and his family were very amiable. In his residence was an apartment which had two windows (a rarity in Persia), whence the harbour was discernible. It was there that the Europeans assembled, and my friend the captain was frequently amongst the number. One day I perceived at the entrance of a caravanserai a man most singularly dressed, his hand resting upon a basket, from which he took out small books. He

was surrounded by a band of little blackguards, who were making game of him ; his face was, I believe, even less prepossessiug than Dr. Wolff's ; like him he had abjured Judaism to become a Protestant missionary, but he was better informed ; and, without priding himself upon being familiar with every language, he expressed himself with facility in Persian. He did not follow the whims of his imagination and range over the whole earth ; his mission was confined to the conversion of the Jews of Persia and Arabia.

An author whose genius every one admires, but the accuracy of whose judgment in forming an opinion of foreigners few persons have been able to estimate at its just value—I mean Monsieur de Châteaubriand—has so well explained the reasons why Protestant missionaries do not succeed as well as Roman Catholics, that it were as useless as absurd to discuss this subject after him. The individual I have alluded to above, Mr. Samuel, had in vain tried to establish himself at Shiraz, at Ispahan, or at other places where there were Israelites :—he had met with no success. At last he came to Bagdad, and Colonel Taylor, the political agent of the Company, could not refuse to aid him. He paraded through the town accompanied by a Janissary, and courageously distributed his books in the bazaar. A tumult was the consequence ; the Mahometans, who, in the first few sentences, detected insults launched against their Prophet, insisted that the offender should be delivered into their hands, and it was with much difficulty that he was enabled to escape in a boat. The Christians of Bagdad, supposed to have partici-

pated in the sentiments of this itinerant fanatic, were in great danger, and esteemed themselves fortunate in being subject to insult only.

It was after this grand exploit that he began anew at Bushire, incurring the same risk of creating an uproar there. Major Morrison was anxious to get rid of him, and the Christians of the town not less so than he. Codja Malallah was prominent among the latter; for he had little reason to like Dr. Wolff, and nourished no very great affection for his successor. In fact, when Dr. Wolff passed through Bushire, he had grand projects in his head; public schools were much spoken of, and he wished to set them up every where. Supported by Colonel Stannus, he had established one, and Malallah had given up his trade in brandy to turn pedagogue. I saw him at that time, and he had assumed so sanctified an appearance and so gentle a voice, addressing his scholars so benignly, that he reminded me of Ambrose Lamela. But Dr. Wolff's projects proved abortive. His patrons could not found schools all over the globe; funds were wanting, and Codja Malallah, disappointed in his expectations, forsook his disciples, and had recourse once more to his brandy bottles and samples of rose-water.

But to return to Mr. Samuel. He was so plagued by the landlord who had let him an apartment, that he wished to leave, and the means were immediately placed at his disposal. On the follow-lowing day, whilst poor Malallah was congratulating himself on this riddance, who should come in but the missionary, followed by the crew of the *baglo*, who were creating a most tremendous up-

roar. The *nacoda* declared that his passenger had insisted on preaching, and had abused the Prophet; for his own part he looked upon him as a madman, but his crew might entertain other sentiments and throw him overboard if he should repeat his impieties. He wished to land him, but Malallah persuaded him to take him on this proviso, that Mr. Samuel should abstain from preaching, and bind himself by writing to that effect: and furthermore, that the *nacoda* should not be held responsible for what might happen if Mr. Samuel did not keep the peace. Having accepted these conditions, the preacher wrote out the agreement, which it was needlessly insisted should be read to Captain Lowe and myself. He now departed once more, and that same night, during the most dreadful weather, the servant who had been procured to attend him made his appearance. Annoyed by his master's discourse, he determined to escape, but fearful lest he should be retaken if he left him too soon, he waited until the vessel was about to sail, and then decamped, knowing that the *baglo* could not return.

Invested, very much against my inclination and without necessity, with an official character, I was far from desirous, as I have previously stated, it should be supposed that I was under British protection; nevertheless, I should have been wanting in courtesy had I not informed Major Morrison that I proposed to pay a visit to the Governor, Sheikh Nassir. I had again occasion, in this occurrence, to observe the encroachment of the English: the Governors of the towns where they have Residents are required to pay them the first visit. Certainly, such pretensions would never

have been tolerated by Sheikh Abdoul Rassoul, the father of Sheikh Nassir.

I had seen this chief hold his court with oriental splendour. He was the owner of several ships, was rich and powerful, well knowing how to make himself respected and to defend his rights. Since then, attacked by powerful neighbours, he was put under the ban of the empire, his town taken and sacked, and himself massacred after a brave defence, when his enemies actually drank his blood and ate his liver! His young son, Sheikh Nassir, sought refuge at Bombay, and the King of Persia, at a later period, gave him the inheritance and the government of his father. He was a young man of gentle deportment and of timid character, who studied rather to conciliate the English than to oppose them. Their good-will was indeed precious to him; and there can be no doubt that, had his father acted with the same prudence, he would have found protection in the Residency, and a sure refuge on board of the Company's ships. The conduct of the new Sheikh ensured him real advantages; his vessels were under British protection: the *Nazaret-Shah* as I have before stated, which belonged to him, sailed under the English flag in the Red Sea. Furthermore, they were employed by the Company, for, when the intercourse with Persia was suspended in 1839, after the British Minister had left Teheran, and the Resident quitted Bushire, this very *Nazaret-Shah* had been freighted by the Company to go to China. Finally, Sheikh Nassir received from time to time some of those presents which

the Indian government distribute with so much munificence and discernment.

I waited upon this Governor in the company of an Armenian who had had the courage to be my correspondent at Bushire, although well aware that this was not the surest way to obtain the good graces of the Resident. What rendered Malcolm so confident was his French extraction, and the European costume which he wore. I am quite sure that he often regretted the measure he had taken, for all did not possess the liberal sentiments of Major Morrison. We found Sheikh Nassir at home; he affected a humility which pained me, as it showed that he did not feel the dignity of his rank and station. There is no petty Khan in Persia who would not have displayed more ease in his manners, and more independence in his conversation. I exerted myself, especially, as he did not seem to expect it, to show him as much deference and respect as lay in my power. I spoke of his father, extolling his firmness, and the splendour which surrounded his administration. I believe that my efforts to rally a courage, broken down by misfortune, and move a heart which throbbed only from fear, were useless. I recommended my countrymen and their vessels, should any make their appearance at Bushire, to his protection; to which he replied, that they would be much better protected by the Resident. I was well aware of this; but for a Persian or an Arab, whose vanity knows no bounds, great indeed must have been his humiliation to make me such a reply.

Notwithstanding the wars, the plague and the

cholera, Bushire is unquestionably the only oriental city which, after having twice seen, did not appear to me to be more wretched at my second visit than at the first; this was a benefit which might justly be attributed to the Residency. If any of the inhabitants had perished, they had speedily been replaced by new comers; I observed the same activity in the port, and the same abundance in the bazaars. It is impossible to estimate the population, but it is reckoned at about twenty thousand souls. The town, which is surrounded by walls, is built at the extremity of a sandy desert, about twenty-five miles from the mountains, or rather from Barasgoun, the first village situated at their base.

The whole of this plain enjoys the climate and vegetation of Arabia, that is to say, nothing but palm trees is to be seen; but in the gardens which are situated about three miles from Bushire, and where the soil begins to be arable, aloes, pomegranates, and some orange trees are met with. As you ascend the mountains on the road to Shiraz, you find the trees and fruits of the more temperate climates of Europe. Vessels cannot enter the harbour, but remain in the roads, where the anchorage is excellent; they are protected from the south by rocks and reefs, and from the north by the island of Karak and the coast. The swell is always heavy, but more especially when the *shemal* blows strongly, and the tide at the same time disturbs the shipping. The reefs gradually approach together near the town, and form a kind of channel which is an excellent shelter for vessels of

small dimensions. On the south side of the town are a quay, caravanserais, and the Custom House, and here the houses commence.

A considerable trade is carried on at Bushire, which is the most important port of Persia. It receives all goods coming from Europe destined for the southern parts of the empire, whereas those consumed in the north enter by the Black Sea. It is from this town that silks, horses, and especially coined money are sent to India, whither a little gum also finds its way. From the Bombay tariff it appears that the exportation of goods, either manufactured or in a raw state, which the English annually dispose of in the Persian Gulf amounts to £360,000; but it is quite impossible to estimate the proportion which finds its way to Bushire, or to any other one port, and still less to ascertain in what proportion they are consumed. The Custom House registers have indeed no value whatsoever in these countries. As I do not however desire it to be inferred that I wish to excuse myself by impugning the authenticity of the documents I have seen, through having made little research on this subject, I shall fully explain my reasons.

Sheikh Nassir pays a kind of tribute to the Prince of Shiraz, and, like all Asiatic Governors, pretends that his expenditure exceeds his income. It is very evident, as the customs are under his control, that it is neither necessary for him to enter the goods which belong to himself nor the duties which his own ships pay. To this cause may be traced numberless errors; as regards the other vessels, it is quite clear that it is not his interest

to publish what they may pay him. Very probably he may have an exact account in his own possession; but to show it would enable his superiors to get an insight into his affairs. Another source of error is attributable to smuggling. When a merchant of note wishes to import any goods, he comes to an understanding with the Custom House officer, makes his terms and threatens to land them at another place if his conditions are not accepted. A government Custom House officer, sent *ad hoc*, would be in the same situation as the Sheikh himself.

Independently of my having seen agreements of this sort, I witnessed a quarrel between Captain Mac Intyre (who had come for the first time to Bushire, and was ignorant of the customs of the place) and the merchants, because he wished to deliver them their goods in a regular manner. They insisted upon having the ship unloaded, and then they would produce their bills of lading. Captain Mac Intyre, on the other hand, determined upon delivering nothing until the documents were tendered to him on board. The object which the merchants had in view was to pass the goods before the Custom House, without the officers knowing what they went to claim on board, so as to evade the duty as soon as they received their goods, which they would have taken care to convey away immediately after. The quarrel lasted three days, and the merchants only made up their minds to give way when they saw that the captain was resolved the goods should pass through the Custom House.

The Residency at Bushire keeps a register of all the goods imported in vessels under the British

flag, but is not able to ascertain what part of them is landed at Bushire, or what is sent farther on; and it is equally in the dark as to those which are imported in vessels not under the British flag. In short, the only sure guide is the report of the Bombay Custom House; and even this cannot be relied upon as regards the precious metals, coined, or in ingots, for merchants always diminish the value of these in their clearances.

That which I have just stated of Bushire applies to all the ports of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea, as well as to Muscat; and I affirm that it is quite impossible to make a calculation, pretending to accuracy, respecting the trade of those countries. Public registers, as well as private declarations, are equally false.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Departure from Bushire—Karrack—The banks of the Euphrates—Bassora—Position of the French and English agents at Bagdad and at Bassora.

When I first visited Bushire, European society was more numerous than I found it on my return thither. At the former period a number of ladies resided there, and the contingences of the public service brought many vessels of war to the port. Most of the officers lived ashore: the Indian Navy had not at that time been assimilated to the Royal Navy, and its vessels were merely regarded as merchantmen, unusually well equipped and appointed. In a word, they were not under English military law. The officers of these vessels, I must add, were not treated by all their fellow countrymen as *gentlemen*, although undoubtedly worthy of the title. I was not then aware of the precise meaning of the word, which I supposed equivalent to *gentilhomme* in French, and could not understand how officers of the army, possessing no title, should consider themselves far superior to the officers of the Indian Navy. I was not then aware that this most arbitrary title depends on birth, or on the profession of the individual, and that to refuse it to

an Englishman who has a right to it, constitutes the greatest of insults. Consequently I heeded little whether those I associated with were gentlemen or not. We used to walk together into the country or about town, and go out on shooting and riding parties. One of our favourite resorts was the residence of a rich Armenian merchant, who had a garden about two leagues from town. It was the central point of our excursions.

In the interval between my two visits, the officers of the Indian Navy had become gentlemen by Act of Parliament, which put them on a footing with the Royal Navy: they had now a right to be styled Esquire. They were so completely under the influence of martial law that they were obliged to pass most of their time on board, and no longer infused life into the place by their gaiety and love of sports. Codja Aretun, the Armenian, whom we used to visit, and who was an excellent Persian scholar, was dead and his family dispersed. It was the season of clouds, rain, and cold, so that I was but slightly grieved when I quitted Bushire, notwithstanding the hospitable reception I had experienced.

Major Morrison had at his orders a handsome schooner, which the government provided him with that he might proceed to any part of the Gulf, where he deemed that his presence would be useful. He was about to dispatch this schooner to Bassora, to procure tidings of Colonel Chesney's expedition, and had the kindness to offer me a passage in her.

Immediately after leaving Bushire, we took on board a pilot at the island of Karrack, which has

since attracted attention through its occupation by the English. It is about two miles in diameter, exhibiting nothing but sand on the side next the mainland, but the western side is slightly cultivated. There is a kind of fort, said to have been constructed by the Dutch when they held possession of the island, and where the staff on which their flag was hoisted may still be seen. This fort was used by the inhabitants as a place of retreat. The pilots are under the orders of the Sheikh of Bushire, who grants permission for them to go on board upon receiving a portion of their fees. The one we took into our service was nearly blind, and required the assistance of one of his comrades; but this did not prevent his piloting us uncommonly well, although the sand-banks, which obstruct the mouth of the Euphrates, rendered his task somewhat difficult. It often happens that vessels of large tonnage get aground when the tide is low.

Before reaching what may be properly styled the channel of the river, there are three principal bars which must be passed. One is in the offing, the next is passed when within sight of the two shores, while the third, and most extensive, is in the neighbourhood of Mohamera. The last-mentioned is caused by the conformation of the land which is very low, and allows the waters of the river to spread over a great surface and form a sort of lake. These bars are called *daba*, and, when they are once passed, there is no further obstruction to the navigation of the river, which is more majestic than the Nile. Its scenery too is far more picturesque: the banks are clothed with forests of date trees, and vessels of six hundred tons may proceed up as far

as Corna, more than thirty leagues distant from its mouth. This navigation is not dangerous like that of the Ganges, as, instead of sand, the bed of the river consists of mud, gradually declining towards the sea. When ships get aground, they imbed themselves without injury in the mud, and the next favourable tide sets them afloat again. We kept on our course without landing at any intermediate place, and in six hours cast anchor before the fort of Bassora.

Bassora does not stand on the banks of the river, but on a canal; and it takes half an hour to reach it. This seems to be the case with most villages in that country. They are nearly all situated in the interior, and have evidently been built at a distance from the river, through fear of pirates and other enemies. Numerous canals, which are useful for the purposes of irrigation, thus branch off from the Euphrates, in that part of its course, and indeed from Corna, called *Chat-el-Arab*, or the Arabs' River. Here the crops do not require to be watered by hand-labour as in Egypt. The tide, as I have before stated, rises to a great height in the Persian Gulf, and causes a reflux of the fresh water for two hundred miles into the interior. When the sluices are closed, the water of the river spreads into the main canals, and from them into the smaller, which form, as it were, a vast net over the whole surface of the country.

The Turks have erected, on the bank of the river, a fort which would command the navigation, if their cannon were mounted; and in the rear of this fort they have established what they call their military arsenal. The entrance to the canal leading

to Bassora is also defended by a fort, round which stand some Arab dwellings: on the opposite side is a Custom House station. Although high tides sometimes enable large vessels to enter the canal and proceed up to the very heart of the town, the boats usually employed are small narrow canoes, made generally from the trunk of a tree, and propelled by long bamboos. Their sea-going vessels remain at anchor in the river. I could not help noticing, on my arrival at Bassora, how much the town had dwindled away since the period of my first visit. A certain degree of elegance was at that time observable in the dress of the inhabitants, as well as a considerable activity in trade; the buzz and shouts peculiar to sea-ports were then every where to be heard. A death-like silence now reigned around, and we reached the house of the English Resident almost without meeting a single human being. Here, too, a great alteration had taken place, for the Resident had removed to Bagdad, partly to avoid the climate of Bassora, and partly with the view of making friends with the Pacha, whose authority over the country is supreme. The palace, or I might almost say fortress, in which I had first set eyes on Indian troops, and within the walls of which I had witnessed such luxury and bustle, was now deserted and fast falling to ruin.

The French Factory, an elegant building, and situated close by, was in a state of still more deplorable decay Crumbling walls were visible in all directions, and only a few shops were open in a bazaar which used to be crowded ten years ago. It is true that the plague and the cholera had recently made frightful ravages in the town, but there, as in

every other part of Turkey, the decay observable was mainly to be ascribed to the mode of government and the administration of affairs.

The present condition of Bassora cannot fail to recall to the traveller's mind those descriptions of ancient Babylon which have been handed down to us. Like that city of antiquity, and probably for similar reasons, Bassora is encircled and defended by walls, which embrace within their vast circumference not only the houses, but even the gardens, and extend to the river. The walls on the outside are perpendicular, but, within, slope gently towards the city, so that their summit is easily gained. In conjunction with a system of canals outside the ramparts, similar to that which irrigates the space enclosed, these walls present an adequate means of defence against the Arabs of the Desert. The town and its suburbs are under the authority of a Mutselim, appointed by the Pacha of Bagdad, whose orders he is bound to obey. His authority extends, or ought at least to be recognised, as far north as Corna, and to the sea coast on the south; but practically it does not reach much beyond the precincts of his palace, which is situated in a public square and surrounded by battlemented walls. This building belongs to the government, and is garrisoned by a few Turkish soldiers, resembling the Aïta, whom I have described in my account of Egypt. The servants of the Governor are numerous enough to guard him against any sudden attack; and from amongst them he selects the various public functionaries; they are looked upon as part of the garrison.

The East India Company's Resident, who at that

time inhabited Bagdad, had formerly lived at Bassora, and had shown me great attention on my former visit. Although he had in the interim risen from the rank of Captain to that of Colonel, he still retained the same appointment, conformably to the very judicious practice of the East India Company, which thus secures in the management of its affairs a unity and coherency of action, and thorough local experience, which it would be vain to expect from functionaries, holding different views and opinions, rapidly succeeding each other. Colonel Taylor was kind enough to allow me the use of his house at Bassora; and as it contained several European articles of furniture, and a few rooms in tolerable condition, his politeness was very acceptable. The articles which I required were not elsewhere to be procured. Colonel Taylor's deputy representative at Bassora was an Armenian, named Agha Barseigh, who actually possessed greater authority than the Governor himself. He was one of those native agents whom the Company employs, and whom probably no other government but that body could employ with success, because it alone possesses officers capable of watching over their conduct. Having received instructions from his superior to assist me in establishing my quarters at Bassora, he procured for me a privilege which the English agents in that quarter of the globe have secured to themselves. In a word, to my utter astonishment, he requested the Governor to pay his respects to me before I had waited upon him; and accordingly, he made his appearance one day accompanied by several of his officers. We had arranged the chairs in

two rows; the Mahometans seated themselves in a line, while we Christians took our places opposite to them. Proper distances were moreover left between the different chairs, with the most scrupulous regard to Oriental etiquette. Practice has made me quite an adept in that science, so all-important amongst Eastern nations; and I rather think the Governor considered me a better bred man than the generality of Europeans he had met with. I ordered pipes and coffee to be served at the proper moment, without allowing him to ask for either, and by these means put myself on a footing of equality with him. I took care to be served at the same time that he was; cautiously avoided turning my head to either side, and remained as motionless as possible during his visit. My visitor, whose name was Mehemet Tchelebi, was an Arab of Aleppo; tall in person and possessing a handsome and striking countenance. He appeared to be about thirty years of age, and, as he had only recently entered on his public functions, he had not yet acquired that air of assurance which seems somehow inherent in robes of office. The inhabitants were all loud in their praises of him; a circumstance however of little weight, for in despotic countries it is impossible not to speak well of the Governor, though he be the greatest villain upon earth.

The manner, however, in which he rose to his present rank deserves mention. When my Bombay friend decamped with the revenue of the province, Ali Pacha resolved not to expose himself a second time to the same risk. Although

in some respects generous, there was still a little of the leaven of national rapacity in his composition. He hit upon the following scheme:—he had brought with him from Aleppo a merchant, named Abdul-Khader-Agha, who in all likelihood had advanced him money, and whom he had appointed comptroller of customs. This man enjoyed the unlimited confidence of the Pacha, and became the most influential person at Bagdad. He was also said to be immensely rich. The Pacha sold to him the governorship of Bassora, the administration of which was entrusted by the comptroller to his friend Mehemet Tchelebi, to whom he allowed about sixteen pounds a month, besides defraying the expenses of the establishment. Like his principal at Bagdad, Mehemet Tchelebi was also a merchant; and there was every ground to expect that he would be more punctual in his payments than his predecessor. As for the Pacha, he was, if my information be correct, the leading partner in the association which preyed on the vitals of the country; but his name did not appear, for he dreaded the Porte, and affected extreme poverty and contempt for riches.

The English Resident was unwilling, it should be supposed, that the appointment of Mutselim had been made without his being consulted, more especially as the former agent had been appointed with his sanction. He affected therefore to protect Mehemet Tchelebi: and on the departure of that official for the seat of his government, Colonel Taylor accompanied him on board his vessel, by way of marking his approbation. The expences of the Resident's establishment at Bag-

dad was, like that at Bushire, defrayed by the Company. The reader may easily conceive what influence must have been possessed by this agent, who had lived for twenty years in the country, having considerable sums of money at his command, surrounded by Armenians devoted to his service, and, through his wife, allied to him; and who had maintained his position amidst those multifarious convulsions which had successively overthrown all the native powers.

France alone had been in a situation to counteract English influence in that portion of the Ottoman dominions, and certain *firmans* which were published at very opportune moments testified, in the days of the French Empire, that we could defend ourselves there. It must, however, be admitted that, even at that period, our influence was little felt at Bassora. Regular diplomatic relations, useful at Bagdad, and which could have no other aim than India, were actively kept up in the first years of the present century. We had as Consul there M. Rousseau, who was born in that country, and who throughout his residence there proved himself a most valuable public servant. He was succeeded by M. Raymond, who, by his residence in India, his travels in Persia and Mesopotamia, and his knowledge of the language, was pre-eminently qualified for the post. He still filled it when the Restoration took place. We all know that, although at a later period the restored dynasty may have been animated by national sentiments, it had at all events previously persecuted, by accusing of Bonapartism, many individuals who had distin-

guished themselves by their determined hostility to the enemies of France. This was the case with M. Raymond. He was forced to leave his native country; and, in order to support his family, was obliged to offer his services as a soldier of fortune to some Persian Prince. He afterwards entered the service of the Pacha of Bagdad; and unhappily fell a victim to the cholera at the siege of Meschid Ali, leaving three unmarried daughters and three boys of tender years.

Such was the fate of a man of rare intelligence, who acquired a name by his erudite publication on the ruins of Babylon, who fired the only shot that took effect on the English fleet as it passed the Dardanelles on its return from Constantinople, and who had in short been the representative of France in these distant regions. All this was not calculated to encourage his successor, M. Vigouroux, in making any great efforts to maintain the national dignity; not that I would have the reader infer that a man, who had been a member of our legislative assemblies was devoid of patriotism; but it seems that he was chosen on account of his age, and his infirmities; perhaps even for his ignorance of the country. The government sent as far out of the way as possible an old Revolutionist, so that he should be unable to cause them any embarrassment. If this was the object they had in view, it was certainly attained. Never before did the Turks so insolently treat the representative of France, who was afraid to complain of their treatment, and his Janisaries were imprisoned when they ventured to remonstrate in his name. But the English agent, all the while, had cause to exult; after having effected

the recall of M. Raymond, he made even the Pacha tremble.

Escorted by numerous attendants, guards on foot and on horseback, and artillery, Mr. Rich displayed at Bagdad unprecedented pomp and magnificence, while Sir James Mackintosh, his father-in-law, boldly declared in Parliament that it was necessary that Great Britain should be all-powerful in Persia and the Pachalic of Bagdad. She became so; and one day Mr. Rich declared war, I may say, against the Pacha: he closed his residence, armed his soldiers, secured by gifts the co-operation of a party in the town, and forced his antagonist to come to his terms. Nor did he stop there: he actually caused the Company's ships to enter the river, and put a stop to the navigation. Thus a simple Resident ventured, in profound peace, and without the sanction of his government, to blockade a portion of the Ottoman Empire, and yet neither the Ambassadors at Constantinople nor the governments of Europe, (all so ready to prate about the integrity of the Sultan's dominions), nor any one else, ventured to expostulate. In consequence of those violent proceedings, he was obliged however to withdraw for a season from the scene of his exploits. He went to travel in Persia, and died at Shiraz. On a former occasion he had left his post without leave of absence, and, in defiance of the Company's regulations, visited Europe, and every where met with such a reception as his abilities and boldness entitled him to. His reception at Paris was the more cordial from his being a Frenchman, having been born at Dijon.

M. Vigouroux contrived to bear with patience

all the annoyance which the audacious proceedings of his English colleague must have occasioned him; but he was less fortunate with the clergy. The government appointed, as Bishop of Babylon, a missionary who had distinguished himself among the ranks of those preachers whom the Restoration sent forth to all parts of France, and whose intemperate zeal led to such deplorable results. This bishopric owes its origin to a legacy left by a French lady, who founded an annuity applicable to the maintenance of the incumbent, who was required to be a Frenchman born. The capital so left ought to have produced an annual income of six thousand francs, but was confiscated, I believe, during the revolution as being the property of the Clergy. The Holy See demanded the restitution of the fund, and meanwhile exercised the right of presentation. The Abbé de Couperie was a man of austere habits, but easy manners; he knew mankind, having travelled much as a soldier of the emigration; he had now withdrawn from the world, and devoted himself with enthusiasm to his religious duties. He and M. Vigouroux could not long agree, and as it might be expected, the latter was sacrificed. The Bishop became his successor.

This seemed a suitable opportunity for paying him the stipend claimed by the Church, after which our government thought fit to confer on him the appointment of French *Chargé d'Affaires* at Bagdad. This made him in a great measure independent of our Embassy at Constantinople, and enabled him, under pretence of providing for the wants of the public service, to draw upon his government at home for whatever sums of money he thought fit.

But certain it is, that these funds were not destined for his own use, for he led the life of an anchorite. His beneficence was unbounded, and he supplied the necessities of all the poor who there constitute a large portion of the community. Being however entirely absorbed in religious zeal, he strove neither to counterbalance the influence of England, nor to detect and unmask her schemes. He died of the plague shortly after the revolution of July, and M. Beuscher, the principal Dragoman, who filled the post *ad interim* was recalled a short time afterwards. For the next three years France was unrepresented in that country.

Our interests were still more sadly neglected at Bassora. In the time of the Empire, we had to keep in check there Mr. Manesty, a man of very superior abilities, and of the most honourable character, whose memory is still cherished in that place. He was the agent of the East India Company, when its attention was first directed towards foreign politics; and, although the Sublime Porte, at the time of England's forcing the passage of the Dardanelles, ordered all British subjects to quit its dominions, Mr. Manesty remained at his post and continued to discharge its duties. France never had a more vigilant, or a more active enemy than this gentleman, although he invariably proved himself a most generous and kind-hearted protector to all Frenchmen, unconnected with the public service.

There was a French convent at Bassora to which Mr. Manesty, who had married a Catholic of the place, extended his protection; his solicitude for the welfare of the clergy attached to it was

really paternal. He received likewise indiscriminately and in the most hospitable manner travellers of all nations who visited the town. The nobleness of his mind was especially shown in his conduct towards his colleagues and rivals. One individual, who had formerly been under his orders, endeavoured to do him a disservice, and by unfavourable reports brought down on Mr. Manesty the displeasure of the Governor-General of India. Having also soon risen from an inferior rank to an equality with his former superior, his jealous and restless disposition led him to throw every obstacle in the way of Mr. Manesty's commercial operations. At last, being suspected of an intrigue with an Emir's daughter, he was obliged to seek safety in flight, whilst the unhappy girl was sewn up in a sack and thrown into the river. Mr. Manesty now forgot all his wrongs; by his able intervention he calmed the authorities, and enabled his rival to return to his post. I must not omit to state that, as Pachalics are bought and sold in Turkey, and the East India Company had authorized its agents to advance such sums as might be necessary to secure the appointment of its officers, the individual in question attributed the success of the endeavours made for his return to his own influence. It was only when forced to do so, that Mr. Manesty demonstrated that he alone had effected it.

Throughout this period, and even as late as my visit to Bassora in 1825, we had no representative, unless one of Colonel Taylor's servants, who transacted the business of France, may be consi-

dered as such. Two or three English officials had succeeded Mr. Manesty. It is unnecessary to name them, as each occupied the post but for a very short time. After them came Colonel Taylor, who was authorized to reside at Bagdad, and whose influence I have already accounted for.

Since the days of Mr. Rich, the proceedings of England in the Pachalic of Bagdad have not been so bold as at Bushire. Indeed, there is every likelihood that, as soon as this Pachalic returns to its accustomed condition, the English Resident will find himself forced to conform a little more to the laws of nations, and receive his instructions from the British Embassy at Constantinople, and not from the government of India. The Turks know but one system of government. When a Pacha has once been installed, though he may look upon the Sultan as his nominal superior, he endeavours by every means in his power to render the authority of that superior null. It would be an arduous undertaking to lead a Turkish army across the deserts which surround Bagdad. It would be vain to nominate the Pacha of any other province, and send him, as is elsewhere the practice, to take forcible possession of a new post. No one would be found willing to accept such an appointment; no one would make the requisite preparations, or incur the immense expense attendant on such an expedition; and the Sultan, though always ready to receive money from his subjects, is not in the habit of advancing to them more than he can help.

Formerly, when the Porte wished to get rid of a Pacha, treachery was the only means at its com-

mand. Sometimes it allowed the obnoxious Pacha and his rival to weaken and destroy each other's power, and then appointed which ever party best suited its purposes or paid the largest sum. This system led to the formation of a power similar to that of the Mamelukes in Egypt. When a chief had money to spare, he employed it in purchasing slaves, who generally came from the mountains of the Caucasus, but were sometimes the issue of Christian parents from the neighbourhood of Erzeroum and from Kurdistan. These slaves were called *Gurgi* or Georgians, and sometimes *Kuleyman* (slaves), and both these designations were esteemed honourable. Being all soldiers, they not only constituted a formidable body, but even filled all the superior posts. The Pachas of the province too were generally selected from among them. The object of the East India Company was to acquire influence with this kind of republic, and it took measures to effect that purpose.

Anterior to the present century, the English Resident at Bassora was merely at the head of a commercial factory, similar in all respects to the French factory which connected Marseilles with our own East India Company. At the time of our expedition to Egypt, England to whom a rapid communication with Europe was of the greatest importance, directed her attention more than ever to Bassora, at which time the Company's commercial agent received but a moderate salary. Subsequently, her position becoming more dangerous, she was not satisfied with a single agent; two were appointed; one at Bagdad as Consul of his Britannic

Majesty; the other at Bassora as Resident of the Company. By degrees their salaries were raised. But England was not satisfied with conferring empty titles on these agents; it was essential to the furtherance of her views that they should possess actual power. They were accordingly directed to take part in every internal event that might occur; to interfere in the rivalries of the Georgians; and by advancing money they succeeded in causing those who were in their interests to be nominated as Pachas.

Regardless of the authority of the Porte, these English agents next furnished officers to drill and discipline the troops of their *protégés*; and up to the present hour they have been incessantly prosecuting their plan for reducing these Pachas to the same state of vassalage as the Princes of India. During Napoleon's reign, these schemes were thwarted, owing to the vigilance of the Ambassador who then represented France at Constantinople. Marshal Sebastiani, whose influence at that time preponderated at the court of the Sultan, forced him to appoint a Pacha less devoted to England. The Firman which conferred the appointment made special mention of the intervention of our Ambassador, and its publication in the Divan so firmly established French influence, that its beneficial effects were still felt at the period of my first visit to that country.

When Sir H. Jones was appointed Minister in Persia, the Residencies of Bagdad and Bassora were assimilated, and the British representatives at both places were put under the Company's orders.

After Mr. Rich's death, the Residency at Bagdad was suppressed. Subsequently, however, the agent at Bassora was authorised to take up his abode in that capital. Orders to evacuate the country were on the eve of being issued, when Colonel Chesney's expedition prevented their being acted on. The Resident now bears the title of British Consul; but, so long as he shall continue to receive his instructions from the government of India, and be in the receipt of a larger salary than his colleagues in Turkey, no matter what title he may assume, his presence will be taken as proof that England has not abandoned the intrigues which I have pointed out. Such have been the measures pursued by the British government—such the transformations produced by its policy in its two establishments of Bagdad and Bassora.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Prevailing prejudices respecting France—Position of the French Embassy at Constantinople—Intrigues of the English residents.

THERE are individuals of wonderful ability, who at a glance can appreciate the condition of a country, and discover, without the aid of personal experience, the exact posture of its affairs; I humbly confess that I am not one of those gifted few. Although I had visited the Persian Gulf, although I had even resided there for several months, and had read both the correspondence of my predecessors and most of the works which relate to the neighbouring countries, yet I was guilty of the gross blunder of arriving at Bassora in an English vessel, and taking up my quarters at the house of the English Resident. Anxious to live on friendly terms with the English, I had underrated the difficulty of doing so in those countries of Asia where the East India Company is all-powerful, or even extends its influence. I forgot too how little past experience justified the indulgence of such a hope.

I affirm without hesitation (for India and the countries connected with India furnish proofs of my assertion) that the English pass in these countries for a race of superior beings; England is con-

sidered the first country in the world; and other nations are viewed as nothing more than the satellites of that planet, or at best, as powers which have submitted, like the Rajahs of India, to the treaties and conditions which England has thought fit to impose on them. This belief pervades the entire population from the Himalaya Mountains to Cape Comorin; it prevails too in the Persian Gulf, and very generally at Bassora. And why should this surprise us? It is true that the fame of our arms has also reached these shores: the merchants of the Gulf have not forgotten how our privateers once entered their ports, and seized their vessels. Surcouf, or as they call him *Capitan Siricou*, was the ruin, by means of his numerous captures, of many a merchant of Bushire and of Bassora. But the ensuing peace was viewed in the light of a conquest, the proof of which was shown in the prisoner of St. Helena. If the Porte itself had in 1822 the insolence to tell M. de Latour-Maubourg that the power of France was gone, it is not so very astonishing that at Bassora, which has no dealings with any other nation but England, our country should have been considered as subdued. Nor need it excite our surprise that the victory was ascribed to England alone, if we bear in mind that in that country the services rendered her by her allies are scarcely admitted. The reader has seen from what I have already said of our proceedings in the Pachalic of Bagdad, during the days of the Restoration, that they were not calculated to enhance the dignity of France.

The kindness which Colonel Taylor had shown

me was, therefore, not viewed as one of those attentions which Europeans in the East so willingly reciprocate. The construction put upon my accepting his hospitality was that my presence was tolerated by the Resident, who extended his protection to me as he was in the habit of doing to other unbelievers: he had allowed me a passage, and lodged me like the rest. Had Colonel Taylor been on the spot, his behaviour towards me might perhaps have removed these erroneous impressions. This, however, is problematical, for he showed little attention to the Abbé de Couperie. He probably thought himself a person of much greater consequence than a Catholic Bishop employed in a civil capacity; or he may have disliked the Abbé's religious zeal. Be this as it may, I soon perceived, from the manner and conversation of the Armenians of Bassora, that my title had little or no weight with them, and that the lowest English subaltern was thought more of than the representative of France. Although the English Resident's house was placed at my disposal, Agha Barseigh did not lodge me in the best apartments; but he subsequently admitted that these were reserved for a Madras official, whom he expected from Bagdad.

On my arrival he had neglected to come out and meet me, or even to send any one to receive me, though in doing so he would have only conformed to the custom of the country. The master of the schooner and myself landed in the morning, but Agha Barseigh would not forego his ordinary habits, and it was noon before he came to install us. The state of public opinion may be inferred

from the fact that no one durst pay me a visit without the previous sanction of Agha Barseigh. I I should have thought nothing of this, had I not been announced as the Consul of France; had I not presented my *exequatur* as such when I returned the Governor's visit, and seen it deposited among the judicial archives. As these preliminaries had been observed, it became my duty to show that the Consul of the King of France needed the protection of no one, and recognised no superior. Two considerations induce me to detail the step which I took for that purpose. These details are illustrative of the customs of the country; and secondly, afford me an opportunity of pointing out how most of the difficulties, which French agents experience in that part of the world, are attributable to an organic defect in our diplomatic establishments in Turkey.

It is very plain that when an agent is dispatched to a distant country, and a twelvemonth must elapse before he can receive any answer to his communications, and when this agent is, moreover, as a subordinate, placed under the orders of an embassy—it is plain, I repeat, that the government at home can render him but trifling assistance. This only proves how necessary it is that the embassy should be able thoroughly to appreciate his position, and afford him whatever help he may require. Unfortunately, in the generality of cases, this is precisely what it is least able to accomplish, owing to its extremely defective composition. At the time of my arrival at Bassora, Admiral Roussin was our Ambassador at Constantinople, and I was placed under his orders. No one will, I hope,

suppose that I mean to call in question his undoubted talents as a celebrated navigator, a distinguished officer, and a member of the Institute; but, like his fellow mortals, he could not know what he had never learned, and having never come in contact with the Turkish government, he was ignorant how to deal with it. It is true that his appointment was signed at a critical moment, and perhaps he was selected on account of his rank and experience as a naval commander; for hostilities were then imminent. If these were the motives which at first led to his appointment, they did not justify its being left in his hands in time of peace.

Neither diplomatists nor sailors can be formed in a day; and certainly there is no profession which qualifies men in a less degree for the exercise of civil functions than the navy. In the land service, when an officer rises in rank, his sphere of action extends and his duties augment; each new step of promotion brings him into contact with new branches of the administration. He is thus initiated into the method of managing civil affairs. A sailor does not enjoy such opportunities; he glances at things too rapidly not to be often deceived, and contracts a habit of deciding on every thing with that promptitude which is so invaluable a quality at sea. For these reasons he rarely makes a good public functionary. No doubt it was these considerations which induced Louis the Fourteenth, who did not confine his patronage to men of letters, to attach to the Department of the Marine those "*officiers de plume*," to whom we are indebted for our maritime ordinances which still command the admira-

tion of the world. In our own days, too, we do not find a single sailor amongst those Ministers of Marine who have acquired a great reputation. Need I instance M. Molé, M. Portal, M. de Chabrol, and M. de Neuville? Not one of the celebrated Governors of our colonies, neither Poivre, nor Dupleix, nor Decaen, was a seaman. La Bourdonnais himself did not become so until he had made a fortune in trade.

In a neighbouring country celebrated for its navy, which contains many distinguished officers, we do not see them selected for her Ministers, Ambassadors, or Colonial Governors. Still less would England dream of sending a naval officer to represent her at Constantinople. I know that capital too well not to be aware that an Ambassador does not stand alone. It frequently occurs that he is appointed to represent his Sovereign, merely on account of his high rank, and, without taking any active part himself in the business of the embassy, confines himself to merely superintending its affairs. In such a case, it is of no real importance whether he has distinguished himself in the navy or elsewhere. But our defective arrangements have deprived us of previous resources. In former times our regulations provided that we should always have at Constantinople a Counsellor of Embassy, who was to be selected from the oldest and best qualified Dragomans; and this Counsellor ranked next to the Ambassador. In this way valuable local knowledge and experience were at our command, and we were enabled to calculate the probable effect of any step which it was found necessary to take at the Court of the Sultan. We were then

able to unravel the thread of intrigues which abound there, and control the proceedings of the subaltern agents.

In the absence of the Ambassador, the management of affairs devolved on the Counsellor, in other words, on the person who was best acquainted with the country. This arrangement gave umbrage to our Secretaries of Legation. The post of Counsellor to the Embassy was suppressed at that period of the Restoration, when every department was overrun by the aristocracy and those who imagined that they belonged to it. It was alleged that the Counsellors were not members of the *corps diplomatique*, and that consequently it was irregular to entrust them with the management of political affairs. At the same time, the importance of the Dragomans was diminished, although they alone possessed a practical knowledge of the country, and were exclusively qualified for employment. It can excite no surprise that, by the help of such a system, our diplomatic credit at Constantinople should be very small, and that the government was in 1840, as it has itself declared, unable to form a correct estimate of the relative strength of the forces of Turkey and Egypt, or of the moral state of those countries.

When a new Ambassador arrived at Constantinople, he usually found there some old public servants to guide his inexperience. Admiral Roussin who perhaps did not desire any such aid had not this advantage. M. de Varenne, who showed great ability during the short—I might say too short—period that he was attached to the embassy, quitted Constantinople shortly after the new

Ambassador's arrival. M. Roussin was thus left alone with his new secretaries. The first letter I received from him occasioned me no less pain than surprise, and produced the same effect upon M. Mimault to whom I showed it. My attention was therein directed to the formation of a National Guard in Turkey. I do not know whether so extravagant a suggestion emanated originally from the embassy, but the very fact of its having for a moment entertained such an idea, warrants me in declaring that it knew nothing of the country to which it was accredited, and was consequently incompetent to appreciate and promote the interests of France. My confidence in our new representative was thus shaken, and I made up my mind to act independently, without having recourse to his assistance.

My first step was to look out for quarters—and I found suitable accommodation in a house adjoining the church, and in which the captains of merchant vessels visiting Bassora generally lodged. I next set about repairing the flag-staff, from which our flag had not floated for many a day. It is the emblem of independence, and of the right of asylum, which is of such great importance in the East, and this the Governor was averse to my hoisting before he had communicated with the Pacha of Bagdad. I refused, however, to delay this ceremony, and told him that I did not require his permission, or that of the Pacha, to exercise a privilege which was secured by treaty. Agha Barseigh assisted me in this affair; and, as the Mutselim, with the view of gaining time, wished me to employ the sailors of the Capitan Pacha in hoisting the flag-staff,

we resolved to do without them and procured the aid of the crew of an English vessel. Having found among the Aïtas an Armenian of Erzeroum, I made him my Janissary. I also engaged as interpreter another Armenian who talked English as badly as myself. I could not do without him, for the Governor understood very little of the Turkish language, and my own knowledge of it was very imperfect.

If the reader will but observe that I was the only European in the place; that letters arrived, and were sent off only every two or three months; that I was not provided with letters of recommendation to any of the merchants of the place, whose very names were unknown to my government; he will probably understand how things, which appear so extremely simple, caused me immense embarrassment. It was an act of courage on the part both of the interpreter and the Janissary to enter my service; moreover this useless establishment, which had unexpectedly been forced upon me, put me to greater expense than had been anticipated, so that I was obliged to provide the first outlay.

I could have wished to fix my residence at the French factory, but my doing so was out of the question, because that edifice was in a deplorable state of dilapidation, and was indeed too large for me to think of repairing it. I caused that portion of the building which was in the most tottering condition to be pulled down; and had the ground cleared of rubbish in order to procure a more commodious and airy habitation. From the proceeds of the sale of the old materials, I paid the expenses of erecting the flag-

staff. I transmitted to the government at home a plan of such a dwelling as I considered requisite, the expenses of which would not have exceeded four or five thousand francs (£160 to £200).

On a former occasion when there was no French subject at Bassora, the Bishop of Bagdad took it into his head to repair the factory in question; and forthwith thirty thousand francs (£1,200) were placed at his disposal. Yet, when I was sent, much against my own desire, to reside there in an official capacity, government refused my application for five thousand francs (£200). In the interim I occupied a crazy building, which, had I not left it in time, would have buried me in its ruins. In fact, it twice gave way, and on one of these occasions a son of M. Raymond's had his arm broken. It is but justice to add, that the ministry perceived at last the false position in which it had placed me, and increased my salary so as to cover the expenses which I had necessarily to incur.

Once installed, I received frequent visits from all those who disliked the authority of the English, or whose interests suffered through the Mutselim being in the leading strings of the Company. But these visits generally took place in secret, and, as I had no wish to set up for reformer, I continued to be on a friendly footing with all. At length a circumstance occurred which made it incumbent on me to check the influence of England. It was of too serious a nature to be passed over in silence. Colonel Taylor, either from a desire to augment the influence of his country, or in conformity with the instructions which he had received,

had long sought to establish at Bagdad a military force which he would have indirectly commanded.

Davoud Pacha had regular troops in his pay, long before any one thought of introducing them at Constantinople. They were under the command of M. Devaux, a French officer, who was not disposed to bow to the authority of the Resident. The latter had repeatedly, but in vain employed his influence to effect the dismissal of the French officer, and procure the substitution of an Englishman. So great was his zeal that he had even been known to act the part of drill-sergeant himself. He had also proposed to the Pacha, but without any better success, to procure for his service a battalion of sepoys from India, who were to serve as models for the formation of other troops. I do not know whether the Pacha felt that such an offer was tantamount to proposing that he should abdicate in favour of England; but if so, his refusal was greatly to his credit, for his position was extremely critical. His successor Ali Pacha was on the point of attacking him with a large force, and did afterwards take him prisoner. As it was arranged that Ali Pacha should receive from Constantinople a detachment of regular troops, it would have been useless for Colonel Taylor to have offered him sepoys from India; but he found occupation in other matters when Colonel Chesney's expedition was determined on.

The ostensible object of that expedition was to ascertain if the Euphrates was navigable between the point where it approaches nearest to Aleppo and the sea. It was therefore of a scientific character, and

there was no ground for attributing any other to it, before the publication of the parliamentary papers relating thereto. Such papers, in England do not always furnish correct reports: Parliament is only told what suits the ministry. It is however remarkable that the Duke of Wellington, in his instructions to Colonel Chesney, tells him not to stop for any scientific operation. This was a singular order indeed, if the expedition was undertaken merely for the purposes of geographical inquiry. I do not therefore believe that Colonel Taylor acted without instructions, when he asked permission of the Pacha to establish military posts and magazines at five different points on the Euphrates.

Magazines in the Desert would be indeed so many forts, which, if defended by a single cannon, all the Arabs united could not take. To ask permission to construct these posts, and to establish a communication between them by means of steam-boats, was neither more nor less than to propose to take possession of the river. The request was refused, but the Resident did not therefore despair of success. One day we witnessed the arrival at Bassora of his guard of sepoys, which had been relieved at Bagdad by another company. I think it right to mention here, that when, in 1826, Admiral de Rigny sent eight marines as a guard to General Guilleminot, our Ambassador at Constantinople, they were arrested. The British Ambassador, if I am rightly informed, apprized the Porte of their arrival, and recommended it not to tolerate the pre-

sence of foreign troops in its capital. Nevertheless a mere Resident, appointed by a company of merchants, without any regular official character, had at Bagdad a guard of thirty-six men.

The *havildar*, or sergeant, informed us that Colonel Taylor had wished to keep them at Bagdad, in order that, together with the soldiers who had recently arrived, they might accompany him to Hillah, one of those points on the banks of the Euphrates which he had in vain asked the Pacha to concede; that they had refused, but that other detachments would be ordered from India. Had these troops arrived, the Pacha, who was already much alarmed at the presence of the steam boat, might perhaps have consented to all Colonel Taylor's wishes. Had he resisted, the English might have forged his seal, as they did at Aden, and even have carried their point in defiance of the Pacha; for it would have been easier for the *Euphrates* steamer to have taken Bagdad, than for him, at the head of his troops, to have taken that vessel. I felt it my duty to resist these designs to which the many former intrigues of England lent an air of probability; but I had no wish, by a sort of denunciation, to awaken in the Turks suspicions against the expedition itself.

I therefore wrote to Colonel Taylor what I had heard, pointed out the consequences, and warned him that, if a single English soldier entered the territory, I would protest at Constantinople against such a violation of the integrity of the Ottoman empire. The Colonel made no reply to my observations; but no more sepoys arrived. The embassy at Constantinople informed me that

I had taken a great liberty with our good ally, England. I also reported the circumstances to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and, as he did not condemn my conduct, I concluded that he approved of it. Had the Resident written to me to calm my apprehensions, I should have concluded that, as it often happens in Asiatic countries, plans had been ascribed to him which he did not entertain ; but my letter, the contents of which I had mentioned to no one, was made known at Bagdad, and the matter had given offence. My opinion, therefore, is that I was instrumental in thwarting a scheme which, for the reasons I have stated, I think may be attributed to the British Cabinet itself. From about that period too, a change became visible in Agha Barseigh's conduct towards me, and he sought in secret to do me as much mischief as possible ; but I was on my guard, and before long found means to punish him for it.

Of all the privileges which the English Resident had arrogated to himself, the most important was that of retaining in his service, either really or nominally, an indefinite number of the subjects of the Porte, and of extending to them not only the protection to which the servants of Europeans are entitled, but also of assimilating them to the Franks. In this way he enabled several wealthy traders to elude the exactions of the government, and enjoy, for instance, exemption from the custom duties to which other people were subject. The consequence was that certain persons were sure of carrying on a profitable business, and realizing fortunes in a short time. One of the most oppressive of these exactions was what is called the *namalum*, a

tax of about five hundred francs (£20 sterling), which was levied upon every boat conveying goods from Bassora to Bagdad. This charge originated in an arrangement between the government and the merchants, who agreed to pay the sum in question for a guard to protect their merchandise from the attacks of the Arabs. The authorities still continued to levy the five hundred francs, but had discontinued to furnish the guard.

The Resident demanded that his *protégés* should be exempted from the payment of the *namalum;* and had succeeded so far that these could dispatch their boats when their rivals could not. I claimed the same immunities as the English establishment enjoyed, and insisted on my Dragoman being exempted from the *namalum.* The answer which the Governor returned me is quite a curiosity. It was to the following effect:

"The exemption of the Resident's agents from the tax is only a mark of favour shewn them by the Pacha, who is desirous of thus acknowledging his sense of obligation for services rendered him. When his Excellency is in want of money, he applies to the Resident, who lends it to him. Do so too, and you will have the same privileges."

I replied that I was well aware the Resident's purse was sometimes at his disposal, but that I did not think it was any part of his mission to meddle with the Pacha's finances; that the treaties at all events were silent on the subject; and that moreover I found by them I had a right to

every privilege conceded to any other foreign agent, and must press my claim. This had the effect of causing the exemption to be withdrawn from all who were not Europeans.

It will thus be seen that the force of circumstances, through the mere execution of treaties, brought me into collision with the English agents, notwithstanding my earnest desire to be on friendly terms with them. My bare presence was a serious check to their influence. This state of things is more or less the case in all barbarous countries. There, when a man finds himself alone and uncontrolled, and independent of the local authority, his power is almost unlimited. This was formerly the case with our Consul, M. Dupré, in the Black Sea; as also with Mr. Manesty, and all the other British Residents appointed since the Restoration. All made use of their position to extend their influence and that of their government; but their power declined as soon as the agent of another nation, or even one of their fellow countrymen, established himself in their vicinity.

My residence at Bassora was prejudicial to the English, for the same reason that their presence at Tunis is injurious to us; for the same reason which has enabled an English dealer in salt to stir up rebellion among the tribes of the Caucasus, and forced Russia to spill so much blood; for the same reason, in short, which places it in the power of the first-comer to rouse to arms the natives of India. False greatness no longer glitters when it is exposed to the light.

This necessity for confining the Residency to the stipulations of treaties did not prevent me from living on good terms, either with its members, or with the English who passed through Bassora. I had the pleasure of receiving a visit from Mr. Strange, now judge at Tellichery. Colonel Morrison sent me his schooner, and subsequently my worthy friend, Captain Mac Intyre, came to see me. From time to time we were visited by ships of war, and by single officers, to whom I was glad to return that hospitality which they had so often shown to me. Our contests, it is obvious, were not very dangerous, and it was probably their pacific character which induced an ecclesiastic, the Abbé Trioche, to enter the lists.

CHAPTER X.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Protection granted by France to Christians in Turkey—Condition of the Christians of Bagdad and Bassora.

One of the duties of our agents in Turkey is to afford protection to the Christians in accordance with treaties. The performance of this duty is frequently attended with great difficulty, but it reflects such honour upon France that we should rather strive to extend than to limit its exercise. It is impossible to remain a passive spectator of the innumerable acts of injustice and cruelty committed by Mahometans against Christians, or hesitate to avail ourselves of every opportunity which occurs of affording succour to the latter. For my part, I did every thing in my power to maintain in full vigour our right in this respect; I shielded schismatics as well as Catholics, and, when it was in my power, even extended my protection to Jews. This system I advocated in my official correspondence, and I had moreover the satisfaction of seeing it carried into effect at Trebizond, where I succeeded in rescuing a population of four thousand villagers from Mahometan oppression. I believe that one of the principal sources of our influence, not only

in Asia but throughout the world, is that France is at the head of Catholicism. It is further my belief that, by professing in foreign countries philosophic theories and religious indifference, our credit there is sure to suffer. Intelligent persons who have visited Algeria will admit the justice of my observation.

Whether we look to the tranquillity and internal prosperity of our country, or direct our attention to its policy towards foreign powers, this conviction is forced upon us that the most important of our relations are those which we cultivate with the Court of Rome, which appear to me paramount to the oft discussed English and Russian alliances. I am afraid that sufficient attention was not bestowed on this subject, and that too great concessions were made to momentary difficulties and personal considerations, when the direction of our affairs with the Holy See was entrusted to persons who were not Catholics. No matter how unimpeachable their talent, their morality, and their character; by selecting them we sacrifice our advantages abroad. Those who traduce our policy assert, that with us religion is made a mere cover for intrigue. This reproach is unfounded. Religion is a social tie, like nationality, language, or common origin. Those even who are most free from prejudices prefer conversing with persons who understand them, to conversing with others who do not; I take more interest in my own family, my own village, and my own country, than in the family, the village, or the country of another. I prefer the society of that individual who is conversant with my own pursuits. When I find myself in a company in which, as is often the case

in England, a sort of pity is felt for me because I am a Catholic, and am therefore assumed to be ignorant and superstitious, that company has no charms for me. In Turkey, I should feel more sympathy for a Christian who respects my faith than for a Mahometan who makes it a plea for abusing me: I would aid the former because of the tie which unites us. It was from motives of this kind that the French government, the first that had relations with the East, was induced to protect the Christians there. France does not send thither to make converts to Christianity; neither does she play the part of missionary in those countries for the sake of extending her influence. The Christian population existed before the Turks conquered the country; and it is very natural and very honourable that we should seek to mitigate the severity of their servitude. England and Russia have proceeded on very different principles in their late appointment of a Bishop of Jerusalem. There is no Protestant population at that place, though the establishment of a bishopric tends to form one: it changes into an absolute intrigue that which, in the cases of France, Austria, and Russia, is the accomplishment of a sacred duty. In sending their missionaries wherever they thought fit, the Bible Societies have availed themselves of a right which the Catholics also enjoy, through the medium of the Pope and the propaganda. But Prussia and England had no right to establish on joint account a Bishopric at Jerusalem. As well might the King of the French appoint a Bishop of Constantinople, or the Em-

peror of Russia nominate the Greek Patriarch. This act is one of the most manifest violations of the laws of nations; and it is astonishing that it should have elicited no remonstrance whatever. If our Minister of Foreign Affairs professes the prevailing religion, his inaction may be ascribed to a principle of toleration; but if he be a Protestant, we have all a right to conclude that the interests of the nation have been sacrificed to the religious opinions of the minister, and that, in his zeal for Protestantism, he has forgotten his duties as a citizen. In my judgment, Catholicism tends to augment the influence of France, and I will add that, when I was obliged to oppose the constant intrigues of the agents of England in the Persian Gulf, I could not have remained at Bassora, but for the Catholics of that place.

This religious influence does not appear to me to be more discreditable than that which England labours to spread by means of her commerce and her wealth, or than that which Russia owes to the terror of her arms. Let me observe too that it were a great mistake to suppose that the clergy, who generally guide these Catholics, are a very docile instrument. I never yet saw them disposed to surrender their privileges, to humble themselves for the sake of gain, or neglect their own interest to further the policy of any foreign power. I much question if such a mundane policy has ever been imputed to them, and I verily believe that our relations with them have reflected honour on both parties. On the one side there has been a noble and disinterested protection; on the other

lively and heartfelt gratitude. Influence has been the natural result.

The Catholic population of Bagdad is computed at six thousand souls: this, however, appears to me an exaggeration. It is composed of Latin, Chaldean, and Syriac Christians. The Chaldeans predominate, and, like the Syriacs, are under the spiritual guidance of a Patriarch appointed by the Pope: the priests who minister to the Latins receive their presentations direct from Rome. When the finances of the Holy See were in a more prosperous state than at present, its foreign missions were more numerous, and its establishments abroad better supported. There was a convent at Bagdad, which used to detach one of the brotherhood to do duty in the church of Bassora. I saw the last of its inmates in 1824; he was of the Franciscan order, and had assumed the name of Fra Vicenzo. He was a very respectable man, tolerably skilled in medicine, and intimately acquainted with Arabic.

Although the flocks of the three churches all recognized the same superior authority, they did not live in harmony. The European priests of the Latins surpassed the others in intelligence and information. The Latin community further numbered amongst its members persons of greater wealth and influence; but, in point of numbers, the Chaldeans were superior to the two other rival churches united. This was the position of Catholicism at Bagdad when the Abbé de Couperie arrived as Bishop of Babylon. Discord was at its height, and the Bishop, alluding to the tower of

Babel, used often to remark that never had a title been more appropriately bestowed than his own. The monks of the convent refused to yield obedience to his orders, alleging that they owed it only to their general. The Oriental clergy would recognise no other authority than that of their Patriarch. The Abbé's jurisdiction was therefore a fiction. In vain did he invoke the assistance of M. Vigouroux, our Consul. The latter had difficulty enough in keeping his own ground, and felt no inclination to interfere in these clerical broils.

The Bishop was animated by fervent zeal, and had lost nothing of the military activity and resolution of his youth. What indignation then must he have felt when the priests of his diocese, pipe in hand, waited upon him with their wives and children! It is easy to conceive how he must have longed to reclaim them to the rules of the Western Church; what importance he must have attached to his reducing the monks to obedience; and how he must have coveted the power necessary to accomplish his reforms. It was an easy matter for him to get rid of the Consul, and secure the post for himself. A mere note, as he observed, had effected that. As for the monks, he caused them to be recalled to Rome one after the other, and then he was left absolute master of the Latins. His consular authority enabled him to detach from the Chaldeans and Syriacs those who stood in need of his protection; but as these had a separate church, in which his orders were not always obeyed, he took steps to have it closed. These were the leading features of his ministration: thus we see that the au-

thority of France, delegated to a churchman, had already become an instrument of oppression. One example will show the length to which this was carried. On the death of a Catholic who had made a bequest to the church, the amount was claimed of his widow: either from poverty, or a desire to gain time, she acknowledged the claim, but delayed discharging it. She was brought before the Bishop, and in his presence interrogated by the Dragoman of the Consulate; after which the Janizaries were ordered to beat her, and she was only liberated on leaving her trinkets in pledge. The Dragoman was indignant at the proceeding, but durst not remonstrate. The Bishop, whose nominal income did not exceed six hundred Roman crowns per annum, was in the receipt of large sums from the fees and emoluments of the church, and from pious legacies; but principally from the liberality of the French government. He founded a nunnery, ornamented the church, and opened a school; he did not retain a farthing for himself, but distributed alms with unbounded liberality.

The Chaldeans may be said to have had two Patriarchs. How the court of Rome should have tolerated such an arrangement is still a mystery to me. The senior of the two was named Motram-Anna. He inhabited, as usual, a monastery near Mossoul, where he lived in great splendour. As often as the Mutselim was in want of money, he applied to the Patriarch, who was thus subjected to exactions of all sorts. To satisfy these demands, Motram-Anna launched out into commercial speculations, which ended in

bankruptcy. A priest who coveted his post bribed the Governor to keep the Patriarch in prison, and contrived, Heaven only knows how, to get acknowledged as his successor. The name of the bold adventurer was Motram-Youssouf. Through the interference of the Abbé de Couperie, Motram-Anna was at length released from his imprisonment, and, in his turn, paid a sum of money to have his antagonist shut up.

Here again French influence was grossly abused, and actually made to assume a character of oppression: it was in the name of France that the new aspirant to the Patriarchate was punished, because he had occasionally defended the Eastern Church from the encroachments of our Bishop to whom Motram-Anna was but an humble tool. Youssouf and Anna changed places more than once afterwards, being sometimes Patriarchs and sometimes prisoners to the Mutselim. In the heat of the contest, the Abbé de Couperie made a handsome present to the Pacha, and the Chaldean Church at Bagdad was forthwith shut up. Although the many virtues of the Latin Bishop were appreciated by the Chaldeans, they nevertheless considered the authority which he arrogated to himself over their Chiefs, their Priests, and their Church, in the light of an odious tyranny, and were very far from grateful to the nation which supplied him with the means of exercising it.

When the Abbé de Couperie first set out for his Bishopric, he was accompanied by a young Frenchman of the name of Trioche, who, weary in all

probability, of the Abbé's religious severity, left him at Aleppo, but subsequently rejoined him. The Bishop received with kindness this strayed sheep, placed him at the head of his school, and treated him in the convent as a lay brother. After completing his religious education, he sent him to Rome to take holy orders. The young priest afterwards returned to his protector, who appointed him to the church at Bassora. That town contained a church, a convent, and several houses, appurtenances of the church, all of which belonged to a few Catholic families of the place. With a view to the more efficacious protection of this property from the rapacity of the Turkish authorities, the French government passed, as is usual, for the ostensible owner. On the death of M. de Couperie, the Abbé Trioche became his self-appointed successor at Bagdad, to which he immediately repaired. He further took upon himself to carry along with him the ornaments of the church of Bassora. The inhabitants objected to his doing so; but the Abbé waited upon Colonel Taylor, and submitted to him that as the church, with all that it contained, belonged to France, he had a right as her representative to dispose thereof as he might think fit. Colonel Taylor, whose power was unlimited, without more ado, sent his interpreter, Agha Barseigh to superintend the packing up and removal of the consecrated vessels and ornaments. The Abbé took them with him to Bagdad. On the way some of the articles were lost; and the Catholics were deeply mortified to learn that some of their relics had fallen into the hands of pagans.

I have known a priest in the mountains of Auvergne obliged to relinquish his living for having presumed to remove a picture from one part of his church to another; and I can enter into the feelings of indignation which swelled the breasts of the poor Catholics of Bassora, upon the removal of every article which their church contained, the tapers even which they had placed there not excepted. The only consolation enjoyed by Christians who have the misfortune to be born, or to live in, a Mahometan land is their religion. The efforts and sacrifices which they make to support their priests and churches are incredible. Amongst the articles so ruthlessly removed were pious offerings, imploring the health of dear relations, or recording their death, or marking the rare intervals of happiness enjoyed. Such relics are everywhere respected, and ought to be so; more especially when a church is not abandoned. Subsequently to this act of vandalism, a priest was sent to officiate at Bassora by the Abbé Trioche, who, in virtue of I know not what right, had assumed the episcopal authority.

The inhabitants, already so poor, had to provide sacerdotal robes for their new pastor, and the commonest household utensils were consecrated for the service of the altar. The incumbent himself, accompanied by his Catholic flock and a number of Armenians, waited upon me one day, and besought me to procure the restoration of what belonged to the congregation. I had already heard of their grievances and ground of complaint, first at Jeddah from the Pole who had come direct from

Bassora to Mecca, and afterwards at Bombay from Ali Usta the former Governor of the town. Without attaching much importance to these reports, I had my fears that there was some foundation for them. The inquiries which I made substantiated them beyond a doubt. On the present occasion I nevertheless declined to interfere on the ground that the articles belonged to the church, and that I had no authority to intermeddle with ecclesiastical matters. To this they replied—and Agha Barseigh confirmed the fact—that the British Consul had only lent his assistance at the request of the French Agent, appointed by the Abbé de Couperie, who laid claim to the articles as the property of France. It thus became my painful duty to address to the Abbé Trioche a letter of remonstrance, in which I urged him to enter into some explanation of his proceedings, that it might no longer be supposed that they had been sanctioned by the French government. I was completely borne out in making this communication, as our embassy at Constantinople had apprized him of my arrival, and had intimated to him that I had received instructions to afford protection to the Christians.

M. Trioche, who had received but a very indifferent education at Bagdad, strove to imitate the faults of his predecessor, whose abilities he was far from possessing, and thought that he might treat me as the Abbé de Couperie had done M. Vigouroux. In his reply to my letter, he avowed that it was in his quality of representative of France that he had removed what was French property: he warned me not to meddle with

church business; and let fall some indirect, but significant threats. Upon this I gave official notice to the British agent, who had charge of the property, that, as French Consul, I should forthwith take it under my care. He durst not make any opposition, but begged me to wait until he had communicated on the subject with Colonel Taylor under whose orders he acted. The return of the articles belonging to the church had yet to be accomplished; they were in the possession of the Abbé Trioche, who refused to send them back. This caused me little concern, but I felt how important it was that the population should see plainly that the French government had had no share in the act of spoliation.

I consequently addressed a letter to Colonel Taylor, calling upon him to restore the articles which had been removed by his orders, and by his agents, from a French establishment without any inventory of the same having been taken. I stated, too, that this act had been done at the request of a person who, if he derived his power from or was commissioned by any French authority, ought not, according to international usage, to have invoked the assistance of any foreign agent, but have had recourse to the local authorities. I warned him that if he did not accede to my demand, I should send a copy of the document which I then transmitted him to the Governor-General of India, with a request that the value of the articles thus irregularly removed might be made good from his pay. This step was not attended by any result, for shortly afterwards I received a letter from the Bishop of Aleppo, who was about to

proceed to Bagdad as Apostolic Visitor, and who begged me to defer any ulterior measures until he arrived. This I at once agreed to.

The object which I had in view was virtually accomplished. I had proved to the Catholics that the act which they complained of did not originate with the French government, which, as I had demonstrated, extended equal protection to them all; and that it formed no part of my duty to favour the Latin at the expense of the Oriental Church. In a word, I had, as it were, emancipated myself by showing that I was no more afraid to attack the English Resident than any other person who might deviate from the ordinary forms of justice, and substitute his own good pleasure in their stead. The sum at stake was not after all a large one: the church property produced an annual revenue of about one thousand francs (£40). I called a meeting of the principal Catholics who formed themselves into a vestry. It was agreed that the priest whom the Abbé Trioche sent to officiate from time to time, should receive one-third of the above sum, that another third should be appropriated to the repairs of the buildings, and that the remaining third should be set apart as a fund for the relief of the poor, and to meet urgent claims. Previously to this M. Trioche had insisted on the entire revenue being remitted to him, and did not allow any portion of it to be applied towards the repairs of the buildings.

The circumstance which I have just related possesses little intrinsic interest. My purpose in introducing it is to show what is frequently the

nature of our protection, and that, if it conduces to the influence of France, it is also an incessant source of embarrassment to her representatives. If, as was the case at Bagdad, that influence be abused by persons, who, from ambition or religious enthusiasm, seek to further the ascendency of any party, it then degenerates into tyranny, and engenders feelings of hatred towards the protecting nation. I pointed out to our Ambassador how the oppression complained of might be restrained. My plan was to procure from the Porte permission to re-open the Chaldean Church at Bagdad, which the Abbé de Couperie had caused to be shut up. Forced to attend a church in which a Latin priest officiated, the poor Chaldeans were deprived of those ceremonies to which they had been accustomed from their infancy. The prayers were no longer said in their own language; and their pastors were no longer their fellow-countrymen, as they wished them to be. They likewise complained of exactions, which would have been resisted if imposed by one of their own priests.

The Latin clergy were bent on enforcing their submission and conversion: it did not appear to me however that France had any interest in the furtherance of these objects; but I foresaw serious danger in the employment of compulsory measures. Indeed, on one occasion the Abbé Trioche having issued some orders which were not observed, threatened to shut up the church of the refractory congregation. Had he done so, who can say to what extremities that population might not have proceeded? At present the Chaldean Church is re-opened, and if my remonstrances had any share

in producing that result, I shall never regret the time which I spent in these discussions.

The Chaldeans, who constitute the Catholic population of Bassora, seem somewhat to resemble the Greeks in the exterior forms of worship. I made a point of attending their ceremonies, and went on Sunday to mass. The service was performed in the Chaldean language, and the singing was more discordant than can well be imagined. The priest, however, who understood Turkish, out of respect to me, read the Bible in that language. I was sensible of his politeness, though by no means pleased with what I heard. For if the language of the Bible is sublime in its simplicity when read in Latin or French, it appears low and trivial in Turkish, so wretched is the translation. An interesting custom prevails amongst these Chaldeans: in the French church they pray not only for their lord, the King of the French, but also for *their brethren*, the Christian Sovereigns of Europe. It is only before the altar that they venture to give utterance to this protestation, so simple yet so energetic, against their oppressors. Baptism is administered according to the Catholic rites.

The marriage ceremony presents many Oriental features. There was one which took place whilst I was at Bassora, and from the bride being lawfully a French subject I took some interest in it. One of our sailors had deserted in Turkey, and, after having for a length of time led a vagabond life in that country, he at last entered Mr. Manesty's service as cook, and married a woman from Bagdad. She was left a widow with one child, but,

being an extremely beautiful woman, she soon married again. She then lost her second husband, and acquired so bad a character that the priest was afraid lest she might sell her daughter to some Turk. He sought, therefore, to get the girl married as soon as possible, although she was not quite twelve, the age required by the Chaldean church. The betrothing lasts forty days which are spent in merrymaking; during which the bridegroom considers the house of his betrothed as his own. During this period, the young couple receive presents from their friends who assist them in furnishing their house, to which the bride is conducted after the marriage ceremony. They are then visited by all their acquaintances, and for three days nothing is heard but the sounds of the violin and tambourine. The young wife, decked out with all the trinkets she can procure, remains by the side of her husband, who upon this occasion puts off his doleful black turban, and is permitted to assume that worn by the Turks. A riband, to which some relic is attached, is also passed round his neck.

It struck me that these ceremonies differ much less from our own than those which I had witnessed amongst the Catholics of the Black Sea. This I attribute to different causes. The first is the long residence of European missionaries in this country, and the powerful protection which they have enjoyed. Perhaps too their Governors, many of whom were born in the mountains of Georgia or Armenia, were led by the consideration of their own extraction to treat these Christians with more indulgence than falls to their

lot in the other provinces. They are certainly less wretched in Bagdad and Bassora than their brethren in other parts of Turkey, and it need excite no surprise that they should not rigidly adhere to all the customs of their masters. They had very frequent recourse to confession, without much caring where the interview with the priest took place. It really appeared as if these poor people were afraid to defer it till the morrow, so uncertain were they of the future. Unfortunately it was of scenes of death that I was most frequently a spectator. The Catholics interred their dead in the church, and their funeral obsequies resembled our own, with this difference, that the burial took place sooner, being expedited either from fear of putrefaction, or in imitation of the Mahometan custom. The interment of the dead in churches, where neither order nor proper precautions are observed, excites an inexpressible feeling of horror. The plague had in former years carried off the greater part of the Catholic population, and the graves were then heaped full of corpses, for some of which no coffins could be procured. When a grave was dug, the bones and remains which were thrown to the surface painfully showed what the body, which was about to be consigned to the tomb, must ere long become. The inhabitants did not appear to me to be susceptible of these reflections: the main object of the relations of the deceased was to exhibit outward signs of the most poignant grief and affliction.

But few of the Chaldeans are natives of Bassora; most of them come from Bagdad, whither misfortune first forced them to resort,

and whence misfortune has now driven them. In their native mountains in the neighbourhood of Mossoul and Kercout, it is no rare occurrence for a horde of Mahometans to make a descent on their villages, massacre indiscriminately men and women, and carry off the children for sale. Such scenes have been lately renewed, and excited indignation. Alas! such is the state of the greater portion of Turkey; and it is really astonishing that Europe should have been so long in discovering it. Such too was once the state of things in Greece. I have been told, and have myself spoken, of similar scenes in Anatolia: the Abbé de Couperie ransomed, out of the funds of the church and the government, women and orphans enough to make the truth known at Paris.

At Bombay I engaged a young man as servant who, when only ten years of age, had seen his parents murdered, their home pillaged, and their village destroyed by fire. He had begged his way to Bagdad, where the Turks laid hold of him: he fled to Bassora, thence to Bombay. At last he returned to his native country, in the hope of some protection being afforded him. Such is the life led by numbers of these unfortunate beings. The consequence is, that they do not think it any disgrace to beg. If a merchant becomes bankrupt he begs: if a private individual or a public functionary is stripped of his all by the Pacha, the victim begs. Ali Usta, too, for the purpose of concealing his wealth, begged his way as I have already mentioned through the whole of Persia, and talked of the proceeding as a most natural one. I have seen Christians of all denominations and

Jews soliciting charity in every part of Asia that I have visited, and especially in those towns of India where they hoped to meet with rich and generous professors of their own creed. Some of them collected alms to ransom their family from slavery; others, to rebuild their village and church. Some were deputed by their religious community to solicit contributions to pay some tax or other—some had been sent on a similar mission by their convent. He who has witnessed so much of human misery may well thank Heaven that his lot has been cast in a country where the laws protect him, and where distress, if not always alleviated, never at least fails to excite sympathy. Not only the Christian population of Bassora, but nearly all the other inhabitants had settled in that town, in consequence of public disasters or individual reverses of fortune. The unhealthiness of the climate would have otherwise prevented them from selecting it, from choice, as a place of residence.

The Catholic priests nevertheless remained firm at their post at Bassora, and one of them had been there for ten years without suffering once from illness, till his death. The Abbé Trioche was the last who resided there. The population was afterwards left for years without a pastor. At length a priest, named Kaz Hanna, was sent thither at his own risk and peril. I found him at Bassora upon my arrival. He was an extremely intelligent person, and rendered me invaluable assistance. But for him, it is probable that when I got into discussions with the English Resident, no Christian would have entered my service; no merchant would have had the temerity to pay me a visit, and I

should have had endless disputes with the Governor and his officers. Still less should I have been apprized of those incidents which interested me, or have been made acquainted with the various conflicting subjects to which it was part of my business to attend. People in France, and the government itself, forget that in Asia a foreign agent is forcibly involved in every transaction that occurs, however reluctant he may be to interfere, because it is only by inspiring fear that security can be there obtained. Even at Constantinople, in spite of a retinue of servants, interpreters, and secretaries, our Ambassador is frequently obliged to lay aside very serious business to adjust some silly dispute. The most trivial incident will often increase or diminish his influence.

I know one *chargé d'affaires* who was called out of bed at three o'clock in the morning, in consequence of an offence committed by some one against the game laws; and another who was beaten and insulted by a Turkish soldier, yet obtained no redress. As it may be supposed, except in those places where Europeans are to be found in considerable numbers, annoyances and molestation of this kind are of constant recurrence. I have experienced my share of them; but thanks to the aid and advice of Kaz Hanna, they were not attended with serious consequences. During a residence of upwards of two years at Bassora I was not once under the necessity of applying for assistance to the embassy at Constantinople. Not only was I at too great a distance to receive timely aid from that quarter, but I had moreover so little confidence, as I have before stated, in the Ambassador's judgment, that I was apprehensive

lest his interference might do me more harm than good.

Kaz Hanna was by no means a man of letters. He was originally a dealer in tobacco, had failed and turned priest. He had lost his wife—for there the court of Rome allows priests to marry, and this was not the least of the mortifications of the Abbé de Couperie — and his only daughter was married. Whilst I was at Bassora, the Pacha of Mossoul laid hold of his son-in-law, and he came in a state of great excitement to solicit my assistance. I addressed to Mehemet Pacha one of those letters which are only allowable from the motives which dictate them. I threatened him with my resentment as if I had been a person of importance; I also affected to excite his fears, lest the embassy should complain to the Porte, as if I did not know that, in the event of such steps being taken, there was little probability indeed of any substantial redress being obtained. But the Almighty has wisely made ignorance the companion of cruelty; the Pacha was frightened, and released his victim. Many a time, after having thus successfully attained my objects, when I have written to inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs and my friends of the result, I blushed at my own success; for in these countries the employment of fraud and falsehood is indispensable to induce those in power to perform acts of simple justice and charity.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

The government of Bassora—The officers of the administration—Justice—Mollahs—Bankers.

THE government of Bassora was vested, as I have already stated, in the hands of a Mutselim; but his authority was very limited, because the real power belonged to the Arabs and their chief Tajib Oglou, otherwise called Mehemet-ben-Tajib, who moreover had the title of Sheikh of Zobeir. Zobeir is quite an Arab town, situated about four leagues distant from Bassora. I had visited it in 1825, when I made the trip in the company of Dr. Scott, physician to the Residence, and we found it in a much better state than we had expected. Strong walls of burnt bricks surrounded the city, and within them we observed several handsome houses, although huts constituted the dwellings of the natives. Zobeir, in fact, is the only real Arab town I have seen in the Desert. Derayeh, Lassa, El Khatif and Gren are all surrounded with walls, and contain a mixed population. At Zobeir, on the contrary, there is not a single individual who is not of Arab extraction; they sell camels' flesh, and eat grass-hoppers or locusts; and none of those gewgaws which constitute oriental luxury are to be found there.

The mares, as is the case in Arab tents, are placed near the master, and appear to form part of the family. The dress of these people consists of a blue shirt, sometimes of a silk robe ; a woollen shawl of variegated colours for wrapping round their heads, a *burnous* and two sashes made of camel hair : one for girding their loins, the other for winding round their heads. The children are in a state of complete nudity, and are positively frightful to behold, when they run about with their long bristling hair, their soot-coloured bodies, and their horrible yells. They came up to us, being extremely curious to gaze upon Franks ; whilst the women with unveiled faces, uttered a guttural cry which it would be impossible to imitate. The persons whom we visited received us with that pride and haughty dignity, which is the distinctive characteristic of their nation, and offered us coffee with a generosity unknown to the Turks. At each fresh arrival they filled those little cups, which are so well known ; and even when passing through the streets of the city, we were several times obliged to stop, in order to take more.

The country between Bassora and Zobeir is a desert which no water fertilises, and which every night is covered with a coat of nitre, so that when winter approaches, and the wind has been bleak all day, it might be taken for a hoar-frost. However, there are some immense canals to be seen, which run to the sea, in order to convey thither the waters of the Euphrates, when it overflows its banks. By whom, and when were these vast works undertaken ? Can they be traced to antiquity, and are they relics of the Pallacopas

mentioned by Arrian? Are they owing to the munificence of the Caliphs, or are they like those which are dug daily in order to aid navigation and irrigation, and the dimensions of which are not less extraordinary? If this last supposition be well founded, if, from the fact of canals being to this day kept in repair, and extending from twenty to thirty miles into the interior, we are warranted in concluding that they were all originally formed and kept up in the same manner, it is evident that those Arabs, now so divided and engaged in everlasting strife, enjoyed at a former period a fixed and well organized form of government, which like their history, has not been handed down to us. These barbarians then have created what would do the greatest honour even to civilised countries. At the mouth of the river they avail themselves of the tides to render its waters of service; farther up, the Euphrates is united to the Tigris by canals, large and deep enough to enable Colonel Chesney's steamer to pass through them; at other times they draw so much water from the rivers, that travellers mistake them for distinct streams. I doubt if Holland has anything which can be compared to this.

There are however a few gardens in the neighbourhood of Zobeir: that is to say, the richer inhabitants are enabled, by taking a great deal of trouble to rear a few date trees; and if by chance they find a spring of brackish water near the spot, they build a terrace, and meet there in the evening to smoke their pipes, and rest themselves after the toil of the day. There are also a few water melons, the stems of which seem to creep with difficulty

along the sands, with their leaves discoloured by the dust. I should add, that the Arabs do not always inhabit the town; they frequently abandon it, on account of the heat, or during the sickly season, when they live under their tents in the Desert, and give themselves up to the sports of hunting and riding.

When I paid this visit, Zobeir was governed by the head of a powerful family the history of which is linked with that of Bassora; and which besides gives too accurate an idea of the country to allow me to pass it over in silence. The power of the Arabs had been previously, as well as during my sojourn, preponderant at Bassora; and the Zeir family, which represented them, had more weight than the Governor himself. As this Governor, according to custom, was a Turk and obliged to purchase his situation, the Resident of the Company exercised, ever since Mr. Manesty's time, a very great influence over his appointment. In short, the Residency not only had considerable sums at its command, but enjoyed very great credit with the Jews, who at Bagdad are possessors of all the money and of the trade with India, so that it could direct the grant or refusal of advances to the several applicants. Independently of this faculty, it reserved to itself another, by placing all the most important personages under the influence of pecuniary obligations. If a functionary required money, it was advanced to him; but if he had the misfortune to allow a word unfavourable to the Resident to escape before the Divan, even though he did not follow it up, he was sued for his debt, and thus neither the Governor nor his satellites were much to be feared. Violence was resorted to as well as

stratagem. One day Mr. Manesty quarrelled with the Jews, and could obtain no redress; he went, accompanied by his sepoys, to the Governor's house, insulted and threatened him; he then ordered the doors of the Residency to be walled up, and quitted the place accompanied by all his dependents for Gren, where he took up his quarters. Stationed there, at the very mouth of the river, he prevented all vessels from going up to Bassora; so that the poor Mutselim, finding himself deprived of all the proceeds of the Custom House was obliged to beg pardon. It was not till he had obtained a promise, that all the Jews should be delivered into his hands, that Mr. Manesty returned; he put them in irons in the Residency, and it was affirmed that he only allowed them to come out after they had offered ransoms as if they had been treating with the Turks.

Such was the extent of the Resident's power, and there can be no doubt, that if the treaties were not respected, it was not for the advantage either of the Mutselim or the Pacha. With regard to the customs, the English had obtained the privilege of not having their goods examined, until after they had been landed at the Residency; and this practice was continued after the Resident lost the right of trading, and even when there was not a single English merchant in the town. The Resident at that time lent his name to the most important mercantile houses. As the duties paid by Europeans cannot be raised in an arbitrary manner, and are lower than those levied from natives, government lost an immense profit, which was divided between the merchants patronized by the Residency and its agents. Hence it is obvious

that the Sheikh of Zobeir could not but be very jealous of the Resident, as well for political reasons as on account of the trade that he carried on, the monopoly of which, like a good Mahometan, he coveted for himself.

About fifteen years ago, an untoward event increased the hatred which existed between the Resident and the Zeir family, which had well nigh annulled the authority of the Mutselim, and even led to a rash investigation into the acts of the English. A very powerful Arab family was at enmity with them, and had been forced to withdraw to Muscat. In consequence of this quarrel, the Imaum threatened war against Bassora, which however was fortunately averted. It happened that two of the fugitive family returned to their country, and one of them was attacked near the gardens of the town by some men who intended to put him in a boat and convey him to Gren. While struggling to defend himself, he fell into the mud, where he was smothered. The survivor sought refuge in the Residency, where he obtained hospitality, but dared not quit it for fear of the Zeirs. Colonel Taylor seized this opportunity for exciting Davoud Pacha against Sheikh Zeir and his brothers, persuading him to declare them rebels. An expedition was sent against them, and my friend Ali Usta accompanied it; it was assisted by the Tajib family, who were in hostility with the Zeirs, and moreover protected by the Prince of the Arab Sheikhs, the Montefiks, urged on by the English. Bassora was taken by the Pacha's troops; two brothers of the Zeirs were massacred within the walls, and a third

escaped to Aleppo. There was a fourth brother, quite a boy, who attempted to proceed up the river to Bagdad; but the Residency is said to have given notice to the chief of the Montefiks, so that he was taken and put to death. Nevertheless, I believe, that when these unfortunate natives saw that their downfall was at hand, they sent a part of their treasure to the British Residency or its agents, and they afterwards complained that it had not been restored. The Zeir who reached Aleppo addressed an official memorial to the British Consul in that city, praying that it might be given up; and Colonel Chesney, when at Bassora, received instructions from his embassy to look into this affair. Nothing however resulted from his inquiries. Sheikh Salem, the individual who had sought refuge at the Residency, made similar complaints, and pretended that a sum equivalent to £8,000 had been extorted from him. The Imaum of Muscat supported his statement, and wrote to the government of India, whither Salem had proceeded to make his claims; but no answer was obtained. These complaints must unquestionably have been exaggerated, if they accused the agents of the Residency, without implicating the Resident himself except in an indirect manner; but they never would have been made if the British agents had been better looked after, and had not taken such incredible license. In any case, it would have been more creditable to have investigated the matter.

Mehemet Ben Tajib, who had become Sheikh of Zobeir on the expulsion of the Zeir family, immediately began to demolish their houses at Bassora

and at Zobeir, and took possession of their property. Although he was in a great measure indebted to the Resident for his elevation, yet his interests being the same as those of his predecessor, the seeds of discord were soon sown, and an enmity arose between the victors, which gradually became more bitter when it was perceived that the Governor was entirely under British influence, which was the case on my arrival. The causes which excited his irritation were as follows : a great deal of property, of doubtful origin, was claimed by Ben Tajib, as belonging to him or his creatures, and he deprived government, not only of the proceeds, but even of the manorial dues ; he moreover appropriated to himself other possessions to which he had no right. When any of his friends were annoyed by claims on the part of the exchequer, he interposed his authority, and obtained their exemption from public charges. He thus prevented the customs from producing the revenue they hitherto had done, because he allowed goods to enter Zobeir duty free, and they were carried thither direct from Mohamera without passing through Bassora. The greater part were thence sent in all directions, without its being in the power of the government to levy any duty upon them. In short, the Governor durst not punish a servant or a creature of the Sheikh's.

All these privileges rendered him virtually master of the town, and he was responsible for its tranquillity in consideration of the sum of about £20 paid him monthly. The English, or rather their Armenian agents, did not acknowledge his sway, and they also took property under their protection ; on the

other hand, the commercial rights which they had assumed enabled them to allow goods to be landed at Bassora, which otherwise should have been sent to Zobeir. Ben Tajib's dissatisfaction was excited by a still more powerful motive: he considered himself to be the legitimate possessor of all that had belonged to his predecessor; and it was not without feelings of vexation that he saw the Bassora agent retain the deposit which had been confided to his keeping. During Ali Usta's administration, none of these animosities were apparent, either because he who paid nothing to the Pacha himself cared very little whether the taxes were collected or not, or because he knew how to manage the Sheikh. His conduct had been prudent, for when the Pacha declared him an outlaw, Ben Tajib, who was charged with the execution of the sentence, gave him timely notice which enabled him to escape.

However, after his departure, Agha Barseigh was obliged to keep a guard before his house for fear of being attacked by the Arabs, and he durst not leave it without a good escort. Ali Usta had given me a letter for this formidable personage; and it might have proved more injurious than serviceable, but for the intervention of a Jew to whom I had also been recommended, and who undertook to deliver it secretly. As long as it was presumed that I was only tolerated at Bassora by Colonel Taylor's permission, I derived very little benefit from it; but no sooner was the contrary known to be the case, than Ben Tajib sought my support, and my credit was at once established. I was at a loss

to conceive in what manner I could be useful to a man situated as he was; but I discovered it afterwards. He feared the Pacha and the secret designs of the Governor, and thought that I might perhaps be able to learn what was hatching against him. Sometimes this Sheikh resided at Bassora, at other times at Zobeir. He had an intelligent look; and while his avarice was extreme he was not so ignorant as Turks are in general; he noted down all the remarkable events that came to his knowledge. To convey some idea of the bond which unites the Arabs, I shall state a curious fact: Ben Tajib was perfectly well acquainted with the situation of Algiers, and the projects of Abdul-Khader; and when the first attack upon Constantine failed, he gave me the news twenty-nine days after the event had taken place.

Although the Governor and the Sheikh were invested with supreme authority, there were other posts which were by no means unimportant, and the first was that of *masraf*, whose functions consisted in registering documents and keeping accounts of expenses. As Mehemet Tchelebi was in reality but a clerk, this personage might have embarrassed him; but in this case he must have possessed great courage, as opposition cannot be carried on in Turkey without incurring much risk. After the Masraf Effendi ranked the Capitan Pacha, who superintended the arsenal: this individual had been a bankrupt cobbler. The Governor himself discharged the functions of Custom House officer, but allowed the title to be retained by a superintendent stationed at the

entrance of the canal of Bassora. The *Tuffendji-bachi* was at the head of the police. This man had followed Turki Bilmez, and accompanied him when the Pacha of Bagdad had appointed him Mutselim in the north of his government, whence he afterwards absconded being charged with fraud: he also fled from Bassora, having forgotten to pay his dues. The *miracor* (master of the horse), and the *chiaoux-agha*, chief of the guard, lived in the Governor's residence; and besides these, a number of servants were kept at the rate of ten shillings a month, and had some perquisites. The functionaries purchased their situations, and lived by extortion. These persons, amongst whom I must not omit the Jew banker, or *saraf*, formed, with about thirty Aïtas, those who are called the *osmanlis*. This name, which is applied by us to a race of people, merely signifies a Governor's attendant. If a functionary be dismissed, he will complain of no longer being an *osmanli;* how often did Mehemet Tchelebi when seized with a fit of terror, exclaim: "I am no longer an *osmanli*, I am a merchant placed here for my partner's benefit."

The Arabs disdain this title, but Christians are eager to acquire it, because it gives them a right to be armed. The Jews have not this privilege, and can only enter the service as cashiers. If, however, an *osmanli* is gifted with insolence, if he has a sound head and a bold hand, he may aspire to anything; on the other hand his perils are great: passing for a good for nothing fellow, and only serving government in that quality, no one troubles his

head about his lot, and his masters may do with him what they please. The people are always delighted when any mishap befalls him, for he is their natural enemy. Thus the government would not dare to treat a merchant or an artisan as it does a Pacha and his officers, for fear of a revolt. It is only upon the agents of government and infidels, that tyranny presses with all its weight; and much more consideration is attached to the name of *tudjar* or tradesman, than to that of *osmanli*, which always excites a suspicion that its owner has not been over scrupulous.

Neither do the *cadi* and the *mollahs* rank amongst the *osmanlis*; the first is appointed by the Pacha of Bagdad, under the influence of the *cadi* of that city, who is himself delegated from Constantinople. In all cases, the executive authority absorbs every thing, and the *cadis* are now nearly powerless. They only pronounce judgment in matters of which the Governor will not take cognizance; and they dare not decide against his *protégés*. The Cadi we had at Bassora was very poor, and his judicial equipage consisted of a small writing-desk and two books; he had but one servant, which proved that he was not overwhelmed with business. Neither were the *mollahs* in more prosperous circumstances; one mosque only was much frequented, and this produced sufficient to maintain one of them decently. But it must not thence be inferred that religion had lost its sway: there were a good many Persians who did not attend the Turkish mosque; besides there is at Zobeir the tomb of a venerated Imaum, to which

people carry their offerings in preference. Moreover, I had for neighbours the agents of the mosque of Mecca, who carried on a formidable competition with the regular priests, contriving to receive the presents, which were the only income of the *mollahs*.

I never could thoroughly comprehend the religious hierarchy of the Mahometans, and I have found that those who attempted to explain it to me were very little better acquainted with the subject than myself. The Grand Signior appoints the Sheikh-el-Islam, who, in his turn, nominates the Cadi, and the Cadi-Askier; this is undoubtedly a principle of judiciary organisation. But who appoints, or rather who regularly appoints those who do duty in the mosques? In some places, I have seen the people choose their *mollah;* in others the chief of the district sent some one to officiate; sometimes the mosque belonged to all, and the *mollahs* went thither followed by those in whom they inspired confidence. In this as in all other cases, there appears to me to be no organisation, and every one does as he can. I have seen individuals quarrelling about who should be the *muezzin* or guardian of a mosque, or who should announce the prayers, and no one seemed to have a right to decide between them. With respect to donations and legacies in favour of the mosques, they are registered at the *mekémé*, or justice-hall, and are administered by the *mollahs*. It is said that at Constantinople, there are immense treasures in the mosques; but this I can by no means believe.

I have lost all faith in learned writers, ever since they have represented the *ulemas* as a powerful corporation; whereas this title applies to all those who have a vote on religious matters, whatever be their profession. I have doubted their accuracy ever since I discovered that they had transformed the *osmanlis* into a nation; lastly, I should like to have seen the treasures they speak of before I can believe their existence. I have visited many mosques, but never observed any coffers capable of containing those treasures. I could see nothing but bare walls, a few mats, and a pulpit. Are they committed to the care of the *mollahs*, or of important private individuals? In that case, the one or the other would run away with them, and they would act prudently. No one, in the East, excepting the ruler himself, dares confess that he has great wealth in his possession, for the government or its agents would soon ease him of it.

To me it seemed that the *mollah* had no official character; that he was a man who could read and write, and had the Koran more or less at his fingers' ends, applying himself to religious matters, establishing his reputation by his skill in controversy, by his conduct, and by his discourse. By these means he acquires a reputation for sanctity which induces the faithful to follow him; they accompany him to prayer, place themselves behind him whilst he prays; and then, after he has attracted a congregation to a mosque, he gradually becomes the chief of it.

Although it sometimes happened that he obtains great power by these proceedings; although

the holy personage, enriched by gifts from his adherents, might live in luxury, exercise authority, impose fines and the bastinado, I never could discover that this authority was founded upon right, or upon a sacred character conferred by a superior. Still less did I find that the *mollahs* possessed any of that knowledge which the erudite pretend that they acquire in the *medresses*, or colleges, or that they have ever learnt, as we are told, metaphysics, logic, and theology. The most learned are versed in the commentaries of the Koran, which they endeavour to render as intelligible as possible; and furthermore, they profess to understand something of necromancy and astrology. They are, however, as ignorant, and not less vicious than their fellow-countrymen. I know that it is more delightful to allow our imagination to represent the men who appear with a grave look, an imposing demeanour, simple costume, and a respectable beard, as models of wisdom and wells of knowledge; we are involuntarily reminded of the venerable ecclesiastics whom we have seen in our own country. I too have had these illusions, and am not surprised at them in others; experience alone induced me to abandon them.

I never could understand by what right four persons, sent from Mecca, became possessed of large property at Bassora, sold the produce and returned to their own country when their successors arrived. All that I could learn was, that they belonged to a college of *mollahs* who did duty in the mosque of their prophet. I never could learn if they received a direct appointment from a superior, or if

they nominated themselves. The latter appears to me to be the most probable. They all had on their cheeks the three lines, which persons born in the holy city impress upon themselves by means of a hot iron, indicating a common origin. Of course, they were not delegates from Constantinople, because that city would have sent Turks; moreover, they had the Arabian physiognomy, and could only speak the language of that country. When a change of *mollahs* took place, I wished to see their letters of credit and of recall, in order to ascertain by what authority they were appointed; but this favour was refused on the plea of my being an infidel. Mehemet Tchelebi did not appear to entertain much respect for these sacred agents, and often harassed them on account of their property.

One day, after having had a quarrel, which often took place between that functionary and myself, he came to pay me a visit. Suddenly the representatives of Mecca made their appearance: they had chosen this opportunity to petition him respecting a negress, alleged to belong to a man who had died intestate, and whose property devolved to the Governor, whereas the petitioners insisted that she was free. They chose this occasion for presenting their request, because the Governor, being at my house, could not refuse their request without offending me. It was granted; but I imagined that they had more weight than to be obliged to resort to such a precaution. I may add, that one of the agents of Mecca, on his way to the mosque with the proceeds of the Bassora property, imitated the example

of Ali Usta, and was heard of no more. I learnt from their own mouths, that if they did not carry back to the mosque as much as was expected, their chiefs, concluding that they had embezzled part of the receipts, did not scruple to subject them to bastinado.

Since I am treating of the authorities of the country, I ought not to neglect the most humble, but perhaps the most useful of them, that of the Jew called *saraf*, and who performs the office of banker. In the north of Turkey, this office is generally confided to Catholic or schismatic Armenians; in Egypt to the Copts; and in the south of the empire it belongs to the Jews. They receive and pay all sums of money upon orders from the Governor, furnished with his seal and prepared by a secretary. This operation however is not so simple as it appears. Mahometans have always a series of seals, the signification of which varies. One means that the order presented is not to be executed, another that it is to be delayed, a third signifies that it is to be obeyed immediately, and a fourth that the sums mentioned are to be altered. It frequently happens that the *saraf* is in advance with the Governor, and declares that he is too poor to execute his orders. This was generally the case with Ali Usta, who fleeced his Jew most exorbitantly, and threatened to cut off his head into the bargain. On the other hand, it is requisite that this functionary should be thoroughly devoted to his master, for he is initiated into all his secrets and all his robberies.

Besides the duty for which he was paid, Mehemet Tchelebi was charged with the public expenses, and

carried them to account; they were to be entered in the register both of the *masraf* and of the *saraf*. But these expenses were swelled in an extravagant proportion. One day some repairs done at the arsenal had cost about thirteen shillings; they were charged at £7. 5*s*. When such frauds are discovered as this was, it having been denounced by a Jew, the *masraf* and *saraf* say, in order to escape the charge of connivance, that they were afraid of the Governor, and obeyed his orders. This excuse is always admitted, because it is an excellent one. If an inferior officer were not to affirm what his superior stated, he would certainly be ruined, and probably lose his life. The expenses at Bassora were however controlled with extreme care by the officer of the customs and the Pacha, who were partners in the working of that branch of the revenue; and Mehemet Ṭchelebi's anxiety was often most acute. Drafts were every moment presented to him which exceeded the receipts; and he was exhorted to be economical.

When Colonel Chesney arrived in his steamer, his vanity was piqued, and he caused a little paint and a few ropes to be given to the ships of war at Bassora. Of this they stood in very great need, for they were quite rotten, and remained above water, only because they were stranded in the mud: as one of them had lost a portion of her bulwark, and wood was dear, it had been replaced by a brick wall. The Governor had also repaired some breaches in the town walls, and all this care brought upon him the most violent reproaches. His principal, Abdul Kader Agha, the head of the Bagdad Custom House, who was in-

vested at that time with the title of Capidji-bachi, and honoured by His Highness with a uniform and a decoration, wrote to him, saying: "that he had not bought Bassora with the intention of repairing the walls or the ships, but to make money, and that he wished it to be perfectly understood, that for the future no expenditure should be incurred for the public good!" Mehemet Tchelebi, who was a great gossip, made no secret of this letter, but communicated its contents in the Divan, which, generally speaking is the custom with orientals; but what will surprise Europeans still more is, that all thought the Custom House officer in the right.

It may easily be imagined that, with such customs and principles, the position of banker is not without danger, and of this I had an example constantly before me in the Jew who transacted my business. His father had been banker to almost all the Pachas who had succeeded each other at Bagdad; and was acting in that capacity to Davoud Pacha when a great catastrophe overtook him and his family. Either because this family had amassed immense wealth, or the favour it enjoyed excited jealousy, orders were one day issued for its apprehension. Fortunately the father and his children were warned in time, and they managed to effect their escape by the river; when all the relatives were assembled, they amounted to ninety fugitives. Their fears were not allayed even after they had quitted Bagdad for instructions had every where been given to arrest them; but they too contrived to purchase friends, and succeeded at length in reaching Bushire, where the Resident took them under his protection.

Their misfortunes however were not confined to proscription, for they had to encounter the plague and the cholera, and the head of that family, so miraculously saved, witnessed to his excessive grief, its decimation by the contagion to which he himself also fell a victim. One of the brothers then went to Bombay, and the other, after Davoud Pacha's overthrow, returned to Bassora. Their house and property had been seized by the government, which however did not prevent them from still being very respectable merchants; and they certainly were more enlightened than many of their fellows. If the dangers incurred by *sarafs* are great, their profits must be enormous; he who was the victim of this catastrophe had been subjected to many other exactions, and the sums which at various periods had been extorted from him, were estimated at nearly £40,000. So long as they can manage to remain in favour, that is to say, as long as the Pacha requires their services, they hold, in point of fact, all the power. They influence all secondary appointments, handle the money of the State, regulate the Mutselim's expenditure, aid or thwart his extortions, and decide as to various expeditions. This does not prevent the Turks from treating them ostensibly with great contempt, nor the Christians from following their example.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Agriculture, and products of Bassora—Its Commerce—Dates—Horses—Difficulties which Europeans have to contend with in trading with Bassora.

Monsieur Lubbert, a very eminent captain of our mercantile navy was, I believe, the first since the peace to enter the Persian Gulf with the intention of trading. He had been misled in regard to a variety of goods which had been pointed out to him as being of ready sale, and was ignorant of the almost absolute impossibility of treating directly with the merchants of Bushire, whither he had been advised to go. Many of our manufactures would be saleable in Persia; but the manner in which business is transacted is such, that a foreigner, an infidel, stands no chance of success. Even the English have in vain attempted to establish themselves there, and have been forced to abandon the town. One of the first houses in Bombay, seeing that Persian merchants purchased of them a quantity of stuffs which were intended for sale in the Persian Gulf, imagined that if it sent these goods thither direct,

it would make a better bargain. This calculation, which would have been judicious any where else, here proved to be fallacious.

In Persia, trade is not so simple a matter that an individual can carry it on upon a large scale, and in an isolated or independent manner. No law, indeed, forbids it, but despotism stands in the way. Moreover, the Princes and Governors, as well as the *mollahs* of the higher class engage in it without any great secrecy, and will not tolerate competition. Merchants are obliged to put themselves under the protection of these important personages; and by giving up a share of their profits, and interesting their protectors in their speculations, they contrive to escape from exactions, and form a powerful body. The King of Persia, however mighty he may be, would not dare to lay hands upon a merchant as he would upon a Governor. At Tabriz, the Prince Royal, Abbas Mirza, having attempted to annoy some merchants who were linked with the *mollahs*, found the gates of his capital closed against him, and he was not allowed to re-enter the town until he had made honourable amends. Many persons at Paris must have known a Persian named Haggi Youssouf, the slave of some Tabriz merchants, who carried on a considerable trade. As soon as he returned to his country, he was prosecuted by his employers; but he placed himself under the protection of a *mollah* named Mirza Mehdi, and of the Kaimacan; the Prince, supposing him to be immensely rich, was anxious to share his wealth, but he durst not take him from

his place of refuge. Even the petty tradesmen, those who keep the most miserable shops in the bazaars, are in like manner shielded behind some powerful protector.

With such a system as this, it is quite evident that it is nearly impossible for Europeans to carry on a direct trade, and that in order to insure success, they would require the aid of the local authorities or that of the Prince himself. This case has sometimes occurred, but would scarcely happen again; for the foreign trader, who has no knowledge of the language or of the country, could not remain there long. To prevent him from selling anything, it is quite sufficient for the Governor or some influential person to issue secret orders that no one shall purchase from him. In short, this kind of commerce is impracticable unless for those who submit to be the factors of the Prince or of the merchants of the country. The English are unquestionably skilful traders, and if even at this day they are forced to follow the system I am explaining, we ought not to flatter ourselves that we should do better than they. When their vessels enter the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea, it is always on account of Persian or Arabian merchants, or of their countrymen residing in India. I deem this information the more necessary because it has not been transmitted to those to whom it ought to have been communicated, so that we are daily exposing ourselves to mistakes and to useless losses. A traveller or an agent of government, finding French productions at a price which would afford considerable

profits, thinks that he cannot do better than give publicity to this fact, and furnish proofs of it. Goods are in consequence dispatched ; the speculation fails ; the public agents are accused of neglect, or of furnishing inaccurate reports, and the merchants of want of discernment. This I believe was the case with Captain Lubbert, and I have seen other examples. That mariner's visit, although his speculation turned out a failure, produced an impression highly favourable to the French. It must not for a moment be supposed that our vessels which trade with distant countries, or their masters, resemble the numerous coasters which frequent our sea ports. These vessels are as well appointed as those which the English display with so much pride in those seas ; our masters, better informed and less blunt than theirs, are preferred by the Asiatics in consequence of their courteous manners ; and when our sailors go on shore, they take care not to offend the population by indulging too freely in liquor. The inhabitants of Bushire had not failed to remark these points of difference.

As may be supposed, I was anxious that the good opinions formed of our sailors and ships should be established, and it was my duty to see that none of those vexatious acts, in which they had no hand, should be attributed to them ; for it struck me, during my residence at Bombay, that either from inadvertence, or perhaps intentionally, some people were not over scrupulous on this point. In 1835, a vessel under British colours came from the Mauritius to the coast of Persia, intending to take on board mules near

Bender Abbas. This vessel was afterwards lost in the channel under rather strange circumstances. The captain of an English ship of war, who inspected her, did not scruple in his report to designate her as a French vessel; and the shipwrecked master, who thought it his duty to reply to some of that officer's observations, abstained from making any remarks on that designation. At that period it was not my business to enter into the discussion; but I was vexed that the public should believe that she was really a French vessel. An opportunity for pointing out to the inhabitants of Muscat, Bushire, and Bassora, the difference which existed between a French and an English ship, whatever might be the origin of those on board, having presented itself, I failed not to turn it to account.

An inhabitant of Muscat, who was an honourable man, and moreover the French agent in that country had visited the Isles of Bourbon and Mauritius. He had there made arrangements with some merchants, either French or of French extraction, to purchase a vessel and send her out. He arrived at Bombay under English colours, and took in a cargo for Muscat and the Persian Gulf. One day some Bassora merchants called upon me, just as I had received letters from Bushire, filled with complaints; the former told me that a French vessel had been loaded with goods for them, and that these had been sold at Muscat. The fact was, that this vessel having encountered a gale, had been so seriously damaged, that she was condemned at Muscat; and the goods which had been sold having unfortunately arrived be-

fore the explanation, the captain was supposed to have stolen them; and he was described as a Frenchman. I consequently wrote to the Sheikh of Bushire, and also to the Imaum of Muscat to complain of this.

Although upon very good terms with the Residency of Bushire, I thought this a good opportunity for referring to the official designation formerly given at Bombay to a ship as French, which was not such, and for remonstrating in the present caseas well as for the future. It appeared to me that if our maritime regulations restrict the liberty of our commerce, it was but fair that we should profit by the confidence which it tends to give to our ships, and that we ought not to permit those acts, for the committal of which the faulty organization of the English navy affords facilities, to be attributed to them. I rather think that the letters which expressed this opinion were not very agreeable to the British officials. With respect to the local authorities, their surprise was great on finding that I did not aspire to the honour of having our commercial navy confounded with that of Great Britain.

I ardently desired some incident to occur which should oblige them to turn their attention to the use of the English flag by ships belonging in reality to Persian or Turkish subjects. This protection, and the rate of Custom-duties, which the Anglo-Indians pay in Turkish provinces, are two very important points of international law, violated by England, with the knowledge of the Porte, and without any remonstrance ever being made on the part of the latter power. When Great Britain con-

cluded her first treaties with the Turks, India did not belong to her; nevertheless, commercial and political relations then existed between India and the southern provinces of the Ottoman empire. It is therefore quite evident that the conventions between Great Britain and Turkey related to vessels sailing from England to Turkish ports, whether arriving by the Mediterranean or by the Cape of Good Hope. These treaties were not applicable to the Asiatics of India. They were subject to regulations which subsequent treaties alone could modify. In order to obtain this end, it would have been requisite to negociate at Constantinople, and not allow Residents, having no real official character, to treat with the Pachas of Bagdad, who were not sovereigns but simple Governors of provinces. In these irregular transactions, Mr. Manesty even carried his presumption so far as to obtain the monopoly for exporting horses, which however is no longer acted upon. Therefore, as I have demonstrated, England permitted her own subjects to make in her name, and for their own personal interest, arrangements and treaties with unauthorised subjects of the Grand Signior.

With regard to the Hindoos, she had no right, after seizing their territory, to impose them upon the Porte, as forming a part of the nation, which had made treaties with it in Edward's time; this, however, is her daily practice on all the points of the Persian Gulf, without her having previously taken the trouble to conclude a treaty, or to give the least explanation. This pretention is the more extraordinary, because the Indians, although under the safeguard of the British crown, are not in point

of law British subjects, but subjects of the East India Company. Even in the island of Bombay, which belonged to the crown, the English law is binding for Europeans alone; the natives have their own judges, who decide according to the law of the country. The advantage which they derive from having European magistrates as learned, as acute, and as honest as their brethren in Europe, without their being subjected to the jurisprudence of Great Britain—the most absurd, and confused in the world—is of no trifling importance. Notwithstanding all this, when an individual comes from India, even if he were born in Turkey, all the privileges of Europeans are extended to him. These rights are also granted to vessels belonging to Hindoos, and sometimes to those of which the owners are foreigners to India. It must not be supposed that these abuses are of rare occurrence, for all the Hindoos are looked upon as Franks; and the substitution of the flag extends to nearly all the trade of the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. When I gave information of these facts to the French government, it was not under the idea that France should set herself up as the champion of Turkey, and undertake to enforce those rights which the Porte did not seem to care about; but it was useful to show that the nation which seems to aspire to the character of *redresser of wrongs* in all parts of the globe is not afraid to do wrong when she finds it suits her own interest. A glaring instance of the irregularity alluded to occurred one day at Bassora, when two vessels happened to be there, the one under Arab, the other under British colours. Both belonged to the same person, who resided at Cangoun,

on the coast of Persia, and every one was aware of the fact. Mehemet Tchelebi could not conceal his vexation at being deprived of his dues on one of these vessels, which evidently ought to have paid them as well as the other, for with the exception of the flag, there was nothing English on board. The *nacoda* and his crew were all Arabs. A dispute arose at the entrance of the channel between the Custom House officers and the captain, who claimed the protection of the British flag. The Custom House officers pulled it down and threw it into the water. I strove in vain to persuade the Armenian agent of the English to remonstrate, for however legitimate were the Governor's grievances, he had no right to insult a European flag; and if such an act went unpunished, the safety of the Franks would be endangered. As no steps were taken, I felt compelled, jointly with an officer of the English army, to report the circumstance to Commodore Pepper, who then commanded on that station. This gentleman replied, that like myself he thought it illegal to grant the protection of the British flag to ships which were not English; and that the navy had frequently made useless representations on this subject.

From what I have said in this chapter, it will be seen that the trade in the Gulf as well at Bushire as at Bassora, is quite of an Asiatic character; that Europeans cannot undertake it directly without enlisting the inhabitants in their interest; in short, that their navigation is null, and that they confine themselves to lending their flag. Besides the vessels which carry foreign colours, there are a great number of Arab ships, which sail

under the red flag, and which do not frequent India. In fact, the trade of Bassora is very considerable, and proportionate to the admirable fertility of this country.

It was in the beginning of winter that I arrived in that town; but although I never saw ice there, the cold was severe enough to make me have fires. In summer, the heat is excessive and much more intense than in India; but it appears that this change of temperature from one extremity to the other, enables the natives equally to raise the productions of Europe and the tropics. The banks of the rivers and those of the canals which intersect them, are planted with date trees, the fruit of which is the finest of the kind in the world. Towards the north are raised corn and rice of excellent quality; the former comes from the neighbourhood of Soug-el-Schiouq, the capital of the Montefik Arabs, between the Tigris and the Euphrates; the latter from Lemloun, a little higher up. Both find a ready sale.

All the European fruits, with the exception of the cherry, are in abundance; some bananas are met with and water melons in great quantity. Vegetation is so rapid that pot-herbs are of a very inferior quality; very few sorts indeed are raised. I have seen nothing remarkable of this kind but melangenas of enormous size. I do not think that the kidney-bean is cultivated to the same extent as in Egypt, although the banks of the Euphrates is quite as fertile as those of the Nile. As there is much more land capable of cultivation, and the date trees are a source of considerable wealth, there can be no doubt that Bassora would become a thriving place, if labourers were

not wanting for the cultivation of the land, or if the inhabitants durst attempt to raise new species of crops. The climate is the same as in Egypt: that is to say, in winter there are a few rainy days; but the sun breaks forth again every day in all its splendour and power.

A rich Arab, named Sheikh Abdullah, having visited India, brought with him the indigo plant which appeared to flourish here as well as in Bengal; Egyptian cotton also prospered, but no one dared to cultivate it. They feared that the exchequer, which levied only a fixed duty on dates and on canals for irrigation, would lay an arbitrary tax on any new species of production. I endeavoured to persuade Sheikh Abdullah to grow indigo on part of his extensive estates, and proved to him that the cost of the experiment would not exceed £40 sterling. "Forty pounds!" exclaimed he. "Why, if the Pacha knew that I could spend that sum in experiments I should be a lost man."

He spoke from experience, for he had received five hundred blows for a less hazardous affair; that of having been a friend to the Zeirs. Although I felt very little inclination to appeal to our embassy, I proposed that the Sheikh should ask for a *berat* of protection through that channel. He rejected this idea at once, as there was no security from poison or the knife; and he thought that he should obtain from any special protection of his sovereign a more dangerous than honourable notoriety.

Besides the ordinary fruits, white truffles are found near Bassora; these are cut and dried like mushrooms. Towards the month of November, inconceivable shoals of fish enter the river; they

swarm in every canal, and may be taken with the hand. As there are many salt-works in the neighbourhood of the town, these fish are cured, and the natives live upon them during six months of the year for next to nothing; they are often sold at about a shilling the hundred weight. During the remaining six months, the poor subsist principally on dates, and this is the food they generally prefer; it cannot be therefore said that any one suffers from actual want. As they all sleep in the open air, on terraces, an apartment is consequently not a necessary of life; neither do they dress for the sake of keeping out the cold, for most of them go naked; in short, as they are not expected to pay for the dates which they take from the trees and eat on the spot, it is evident that they can never feel that want which the poor in our country are exposed to.

However, this abundance of food does not prevent manual labour from being very expensive, as mechanics will only brave the Bassora fever to make their fortunes. A porter earns no less than three or four shillings a-day, and the same may be said of other workmen. A Roman Catholic beggar, who arrived at the same period as myself, in the space of six months, had saved upwards of £45 sterling. Petty tradespeople, as well as those who, on account of their position, do not follow some mechanical trade, and more especially Christians, who, generally speaking, are proud and lazy, do not succeed so well. I may safely say, that among all the places which I have visited, there is not one which Heaven has blessed with a greater variety and profusion of Nature's gifts than Bassora; not one

which so well deserves to be called the terrestrial paradise: yet Islamism has rendered it one of the most odious places on the face of the earth.

I have already stated that I could not undertake to give any estimate of the value of the goods which are imported into, or exported from, the Mahometan states, knowing from experience that it is impossible to obtain even an approximation to correctness. It is asserted that upwards of one hundred and fifty *bagloes*, under Arab or English colours, come annually to the river of Bassora for cargoes of dates, the principal produce of the country. These vessels average about sixty tons each, and I do not consider their number to be exaggerated; each cargo may be estimated at about £400 sterling, which would give a sum total of £60,000 sterling for that article alone.

From the selling price at Bombay, one might learn what quantity is sent, and what is the profit made upon cargoes for that place; but it is the inferior sorts only that are employed in distillation which are carried thither; and besides, dates are admitted duty free, because they are looked upon as an article of food, and their price is not quoted. The best dates are destined for the markets on the Red Sea, and then they do not form the entire cargo, for corn and Shiraz tobacco, taken in at Bushire, are added. In this case, it is quite impossible to estimate the value of the cargo, because they take on board at Bassora only such goods as they cannot ship in those parts of the river where there is no custom-house, and where mercantile transactions are never made known. About the

month of September, all the banks of the river are lined with vessels waiting for cargoes; if they are to load above Bassora, they wait for a dark night and then steal along the bank opposite to the town; they observe the same precautions in dropping down. When they have not to go higher than Bassora, all this precaution is useless, as they have no custom-houses to fear.

It is well known what care is necessary for raising dates. The date tree is unisexual; in the spring, when the time for blossoming has arrived, the flower of the male must be plucked and shaken over the pistils of the females. Some time afterwards clusters of green leaves are formed from the centre of which grow pods that turn yellow, and then open slowly; from these issue bunches which hang very gracefully amongst the beautiful foliage of the tree. When the fruit is ripe, it is of the size of a fine plum, of a yellowish green colour spotted with red, very sweet, but without aroma. The inhabitants prefer them to all other fruit; and to be deprived of them is the severest hardship they can endure. When prepared for sale, they are dried on mats made from the leaves of the tree which bore them; if they are of a remarkably fine quality, they are preserved like those which are to be seen in our grocers' shops. In this way too they are kept for consumption, but the greater portion are put into mat bags like those used for sugar; they become crushed by the pressure, then ferment, and form a black paste mixed with the stones, amongst which small crystals of sugar may be observed. I never saw anything less tempting than these dates when exposed for sale in the markets of

Arabia; those who sell them cannot easily drive away the myriads of flies which cover them, and when they thrust their hands into this paste, they often deliver to the purchaser a disgusting mixture of stones, pulp, and half crushed flies.

Next to dates and corn, horses may be considered as the most important article of exportation. The Arabs who sell them arrive from Bagdad and Zobeir towards September; some few speculators from Bassora go themselves in quest of them. For the reception of these animals, extensive stables have been erected at one end of the town. Almost all of them are destined for India, and they are divided into three classes. The first comprises those which are reserved for the best mounted cavalry in the world, that of the East India Company; they must be of a certain height, and rather taller than Arabian horses are in general. The second class comprises saddle-horses which fetch a very high price even at Bassora. Those belonging to the third are destined for carriages. The value of the horses annually brought to Bombay, amounts to about one million of francs or £40,000; and a considerable number are also shipped to Calcutta direct. As horses are likewise exported from Persia, I think that if we assign to Bassora the sum stated in the returns of the Bombay custom-house, we shall be pretty near the truth; those which go from Bassora to Calcutta may be set off against the export from Persia. In India, the average price of a horse being estimated at one hundred and fifty rupees or sixteen pounds, it follows that two thousand five hundred horses are annually imported from Arabia.

It must not however be supposed that all these

horses are embarked at the town; on the contrary, the horse-dealers, like all other traders, endeavour to avoid the duty, first imposed by Ali Usta, which is very heavy. They are therefore embarked in different parts of the river. The following is the curious manner of loading Arabian vessels destined for sea voyages, which are called *baglo* when of large dimensions, and *batila* when of smaller size. The corn and the dates are stowed below the hatches; then a mat, about half a yard wide, is nailed on the deck at the forecastle, and upon this rest the horse's fore feet. The horse's chest leans against a wooden bar, and the croup against the bulwarks; so that the animals cannot be thrown either backward or forward. They are placed as close as possible in order that they may mutually support each other. This does not prevent them from using the motion necessary for keeping their equilibrium when the ship rolls; then they change the position of their feet according to circumstances; and if the motion be violent, the trampling of so many hoofs upon the deck produces a noise that is far from agreeable. The mat placed under them is designed to prevent them from slipping, and their shoes are taken off for the same reason. One groom has the care of five horses, and feeds them at regular hours; he is also provided with such medicines as they may need. It is astonishing how soon a horse becomes accustomed to the sea; they suffer when the weather is very rough, and foam at the mouth, but the complaint never takes away their appetite as it does ours. They are well aware when it is drawing near to twelve

o'clock, the hour they are fed; they then neigh, stamp, and make such violent efforts, that they can scarcely be prevented from breaking their halters. They are never allowed to lie down, and some of them remain three or four months without stirring, and without appearing to be any the worse for it. Sometimes, however, their legs swell; but this evil soon disappears after a little exercise.

It is an interesting sight to see them landed. They are lifted by means of ropes as when embarking; so long as one of his feet touches the deck, the horse plunges; but no sooner is he suspended, than he becomes perfectly quiet. When he is landed and untied, he stands motionless for a moment, scents the ground, neighs, and then endeavours to regain his liberty. Several grooms must then be ready to hold him, and accidents frequently occur. It is at Bombay that the dexterity of the Arabs is to be seen to great advantage; riding the most spirited horses, frightened as these are by the unaccustomed sight of vehicles, with a halter in lieu of a bridle, and no saddle. It has, however, been observed that nothing alarms thorough-bred horses, not even the sight of the elephant. I had no opportunity of ascertaining the truth of this assertion, as those animals are not allowed to be kept in the island of Bombay.

The training of horses on the banks of the rivers, where there is abundance of pasturage, is easy enough, and is followed by all the Arabs who pitch their tents there. It would be erroneous to suppose that all the horses exported from Bassora and its neighbourhood come from

Arabia ; a great many are brought from the mountains of Kurdistan, and when I arrived from Persia at Bagdad in 1824, I found a ready sale for those I had among the horse-dealers there. It is considered that the finest horses are bred in the province of the Nejd ; next are those of the Anissé tribe, and thirdly those bred in the island of Bahrein ; the breed of the other tribes have no marked preeminence. Although I have seen some of these horses, and more especially some of the very costly mares, for the possession of which the various tribes often wage war, I shall not attempt any particular description of them. The sketches made by Horace Vernet would have imparted the most correct idea of them possible, had that able artist had finer models before him. Though no one has so accurately portrayed the character of that race, yet he marks the muscles and veins of the animal too strongly. It is true that those belonging to the tribes of Syria, and which are better known to Europeans, are found fault with because theirs are too prominent. The beautiful Nejd horse has the veins of the head strongly marked, but the rest of the body has the same appearance as that of the antelope, and its outlines are so graceful as to produce an extraordinary illusion, causing it to look so small, that it is necessary to go close to it before its actual size can be understood.

I have also observed that artists never give that singular appearance of fatigue, and one might almost say of illness, which is the characteristic of Arabian horses, and more especially of the mares when tied up near their masters. Look at that

sorry jade standing beside a lance, which she appears to be guarding; her tail is ragged, her head droops, and from her neck hangs a long scanty mane; but let her master call her, and the faithful animal starts, her nostrils expand, she pricks her ears, and no sooner has he mounted her, than off she starts swift as the wind with uplifted head and tail. Instead of holding his muzzle close to his chest, the Arabian horse carries his head horizontally; he does not show that ardour which is followed by exhaustion, but takes whatever pace his master pleases, as if the noble creature comprehended his orders. If his rider falls or dismounts, he keeps close to him, even on the field of battle.

The following are considered as signs of a good breed: the back from the withers to the root of the tail, must be perfectly horizontal, the thighs wide apart, and the lower part of the head somewhat like that of the camel; that is to say, so formed that a man may easily introduce his fist into the mouth, which denotes great facility in breathing. There are besides many other qualities which I am ignorant of, and which it would be tedious to enumerate. I may add that the Arabs seem quite as skilful in the treatment of horses as our veterinary professors are. I have seen them give brown and black legs a white colour, dexterously remove the cornea when thickening upon the eye, and cause that incurable disease, the spavin, to disappear for a few days. They understand perfectly how to burn and to extract teeth in order to deceive as to age, to puff up the skin, so that the animal may appear

to be in good condition; and to stain the body and mane, to make it look better. The price of the finest sort is about £100; but in India I have seen some horses fetch as much as £600.

The Sheikh of the Ben-Ilam tribe had a mare which lived in his tent, and to possess which he was at war with the Pacha of Bagdad, who wished to make himself master of her; and finding that he could not succeed by main force, offered £1000 for the mare. During my time, when the Sheikh of the Zobeir was assassinated, a great deal of uneasiness was manifested until his mare was found. I do not think that the qualities admired by the Arabs in her would be appreciated in France. On looking at this noble animal, you would have taken her for Don Quixote's Rosinante; and Ben-Tajib, who was meagre, like all his countrymen, and whose nose was very prominent was no bad representative of the hero of La Mancha. I also saw the mares which the Imaum of Muscat sent as a present to King William IV; and although very much esteemed in Arabia, they were little thought of in England. Nevertheless, I am of opinion that horses of the best European breeds could scarcely perform what is done by Arabians. I was present at a race in Persia, and there was no question about the choice of the best turf, or taking precautions against accidents, neither was the race limited to a few minutes. The winning point was at the distance of seven *farsangs*, that is ten or eleven leagues, or twenty-six to twenty-seven English miles, across a rocky country, without any indicated road; the winner arrived in an hour.

When Sir John M'Neil was physician to the British embassy at Teheran, he went to visit one of his countrymen who was ill at Ispahan, and he assured me that he arrived in four days with his horses; the distance is about a hundred and twenty leagues. I was shown in the stables of Feth-Ali-Shah, the Arabian horse on which that Prince came from Shiraz to succeed his uncle: he traversed the distance in a much more extraordinary manner, if we may believe Malcolm, for it took him only seven days. This faculty of travelling for a long time without stopping, and their great abstemiousness cause the horses of the province of Nejd to be particularly esteemed. The young Pole whom I met at Djedda, and who had travelled thither through that country on his way from Bassora, attributed these qualifications to the training of the horses, and the difficulty of procuring food for them. According to him, they have to accustom themselves to brackish water, and to live upon a species of thistle, the only plant met with in those deserts. None but animals of a strong constitution can endure this regimen.

As the horse is an article of exportation, females are more valued than males. Arabs of distinction never ride the latter, but they endeavour to breed from the former as often as possible; and no sooner have these foaled than they have them covered again. They are very particular in the choice of the stallion; and it frequently happens that if they have any doubt relative to the expected progeny, they provoke abortion. The Arabs have

none but entire horses, and they break them in and ride them as early as possible, alleging that they are rendered in consequence more gentle and tractable. In fact, these animals are rarely known to plunge and bite, and there is no need to chain them up, as is the practice in our studs, like lions or tigers.

Bassora was formerly the centre of the commerce in pearls obtained by the fishing at Bahrein, and which, it is said, are the finest in the world. They are now sent to Bombay, where those of the purest water are selected for Europe, whilst the smaller are destined for China, where they are introduced into medicinal compositions, and sold by weight. I seldom saw any which were remarkable. It is true that the merchants who bring them, conceal them as carefully as gold, for fear of the authorities; and it appears to me, that if this article were common, the price would not be so high. The following particulars were given to me respecting this fishery.

The boats employed in it meet at Bahrein, pay a duty to the Sheikh, and then proceed to the spot. The divers are provided with a knife for detaching the oysters. The time that these men remain below water has been very much exaggerated: some stating it to vary from four to five minutes; I am pretty certain that the most expert divers do not remain more than one minute at the utmost. They stop up their ears with cotton dipped in oil, and they also introduce a few drops of the latter into their mouth and nostrils, to prevent the irritation

which the salt water occasions. Sometimes they fish on their own account, at others on that of speculators. In the first case they work for shares, that is to say, one half of the proceeds is destined for the boat, and the remainder is divided into as many parts as may be required, in order that every one be treated according to the agreement. If the boat is hired by a merchant, as is generally the case, a price is agreed upon which is divided proportionally among the crew; then the oysters are divided into two parts, one of which is destined for the merchant, the other for the owner of the boat. I have been assured that there are about a hundred boats engaged in the fishery towards the end of September. It frequently happens that nothing is found in the shells; then again, fortune sometimes bestows the best lots upon the most needy. The fishery excites great interest, on account of this species of lottery and the considerable bets which are made. It is besides not unattended with danger, owing to the sharks which attack the divers; the latter strive to scare them by making a noise, and it sometimes happens that the Arabs are dexterous enough to stab the monster with their knife, when he turns on his back to seize them; in general, however, the man is the victim, and the fishery is at times rendered impracticable.

I was anxious to ascertain how the Arabs, after having extracted the pearl from the shell, managed to bore and string them; the process is as simple as it is ingenious. They take a piece of wood, which is of a spongy nature, and cut a few

spherical holes on the flat surface with a knife; into these holes the pearls, which are counted before being confided to them, are placed, so that a small portion only enters the hole; the wood and the pearls are then put into water. The wood swells, and holds the pearls so firmly, as to enable the workman to pierce them with a steel point, which he works by a drill-bow. To loosen them after this operation, nothing more is necessary than to let the wood dry.

Formerly Bassora exported rose-water, sweetmeats, and aniseed, which was distilled in the town, but scarcely any vestiges of this trade now remain. I am not acquainted with the cause of the incontestable preeminence of its rose-water which the Persians try in vain to imitate. The sweetmeats were mostly made with the peel of bitter oranges; but pears, apples and apricots were also preserved. With the exception of preserved oranges, all the productions of this kind are far inferior to what we have in Europe. The aniseed is made by the Christians and the Jews, with dates which are fermented in water; but the distillation gives rise to so much annoyance, and affords the police such a convenient excuse for interfering, that it cannot be undertaken on a large scale. This plant is found in great abundance and in a wild state in the fields. When the Dutch frequented the Persian Gulf, they purchased a considerable quantity of these three above-mentioned productions; but since they abandoned their factory, which, like ours, is fast falling to decay at Bassora, the manufacture has dwindled away, and

their vessels, which formerly carried on an active trade between this town and Java, have ceased to visit it. Salt is also exported to India, and I saw European goods brought by way of Syria shipped off thither; Mediterranean corals worked in Italy, glass ware from Bohemia; moreover, I have even seen our plates made of pipe-clay dispatched to Calcutta. The only portion of this trade which is considered valuable, namely, that in corals, has taken the route of Suez, since it has been open.

Bassora imports fruit and tobacco from Persia; indigo, sugar, spices, iron, English and Indian manufactures, from various parts of the Indian empire; and coffee and slaves from the Red Sea. A very small part of these importations is consumed at Bassora; the rest is forwarded to Bagdad, whither dates and salt are also sent. All these operations are undertaken at certain fixed times, regulated by the season and the monsoon. The first dates are gathered in September, and carried to the Red Sea; but as it is utterly impossible to enter that sea when the north wind prevails, ships do not attempt to sail after the end of January. No vessels depart for India till the south-west monsoon is nearly over, that is towards the month of October; and in case of a favourable passage, two trips may be made in a season. Vessels entering the Red Sea are detained there until the month of May; meanwhile they dispose of their cargoes, and purchase new ones. They make but one voyage which lasts about a year. Those which sail for Bombay take care

to quit that port before the end of May, for fear of the south-west monsoon ; and they return to Bassora in the middle of summer.

In order to proceed to Bagdad, it is also requisite to watch for a favourable moment—that is to say, when the waters have attained a sufficient height ; and this rise takes place about the month of June. The vessels which are to be loaded with merchandise then assemble, and form a flotilla which is called *car*. When thus collected, the crew and the passengers may be estimated from one to two thousand, and consequently are enabled to defend themselves against the marauding Arabs. It is only by accompanying the *car* that travellers are able to go with perfect security from one town to the other; but a great deal of patience is required, as the voyage generally lasts forty days. The flotilla starts three times a year, at most, but its departure is always regulated by the arrival of ships from Bengal.

Towards the close of the year indigo is gathered in India, at which period all the vessels of Bushire, Muscat, Bender Abbaz, Bahrein and Bassora are at Bombay. The first produce of their merchandise is remitted by Jewish or Mussulman merchants to Calcutta for the purchase of indigo. These purchases are intrusted to agents in Bengal, who freight one or two ships, the captains of which are almost always the same, and are accustomed to the Persian Gulf; and by these vessels the indigo is sent. They leave Bengal in February, and arrive at Bassora about June, after having touched at Muscat, Bender Abbaz, Bushire and Mohamera.

The English vessels which perform that voyage find great difficulty in obtaining a return cargo, and are often obliged to take in salt. It sometimes happens that they have horses to carry to Bombay or Calcutta; but this operation is considered dangerous, as the weather is too hot. The horses are placed between decks, and they are obliged to be very sparing of water, which inconveniences do not exist on board vessels of the country.

I think that I shall have given a tolerably correct idea of the trade of the whole of the Persian Gulf, when I have added that a little silk, a few bales of wool, some gum, horses, Shiraz tobacco, dried fruits and a little wine, are exported from Bushire. Wools are also sent from Bender Abbaz. From all parts money is carried to India, and the goods exported from Bombay, exclusively of indigo, are estimated at about thirty-five lacs of rupees.

Supposing that the trade with Calcutta, the Red Sea, Muscat and between the different parts of the coast, is of like amount, which I think extremely probable, we shall find the whole of the exports to be seventy lacs of rupees. Supposing the importations to equal the exports, and we add six lacs for the value of the Bengal indigo, we shall have a grand total of one hundred and fifty-two lacs of rupees, or £1,200,000. Admitting these estimates to be unsatisfactory, and having already explained the impossibility of arriving at accuracy without other documents than those of the Bombay Custom House—which itself lumps the whole trade of the Gulf, without mentioning the different places —I affirm, that the amount which I have stated is

below the truth. In fact, every where, as well as at Bushire, a great part of the money which is sent to India is incorrectly represented in value to the captains who take charge of it. This is done in order to avoid the commission, which is very high, and as the sums are not examined, there must be a very considerable error in regard to coined money. In order to complete this sketch, I must observe that the greater portion of the imports for the Gulf are sent to Bushire, whereas Bassora furnishes most of the goods for exportation.

From the rate of interest of money in this country, the time occupied in the voyage, and the risks attending it, it is calculated that the produce of a commercial speculation should leave a profit of thirty-three per cent; and accounts are settled upon this basis. The speculators have consequently to share among them the annual sum of about £400,000; there can be no doubt that this induced the English to carry on the trade in a direct manner, which would have left them still greater profits, inasmuch as they could have obtained their goods from England without passing through Bombay. I have already stated the reasons which prevented them from succeeding at Bushire; but there is a still greater obstacle in all these countries—the compulsory dishonesty of the inhabitants. It should be well understood that no one in Persia or in Turkey can be what we call an honest man, although he may possess certain virtues. If a merchant pledges his word, he seldom keeps it; if he owes money, he pays it only at the last extremity; if he accepts a bill, it will not be

honoured when due; and if he receive a deposit, circumstances of course will arise which will prevent him from restoring it.

The truth of the matter is, that were he to pay his debts or his acceptances with punctuality, he would be considered wealthy, and be in danger; even were his coffers brimfull, he must affect to fulfil his engagements with difficulty. If he were to return a deposit to a minor, for instance, who had no authentic titles, he would not escape persecution; for it would be said that he could not refund such a sum, unless he possessed at the very least twice or three times the amount. This cause has materially altered the mode of transacting business in the large cities of Asia where there is a European population; and has compelled the Franks, who do not transact business directly with the government, to lend their names to the native merchants; and it prevents new establishments from being formed in those parts where there are none but Asiatics. If the British Residents at Bassora and Bushire, who were authorised to carry on trade, have succeeded, it must be recollected that the navigation was entirely in their hands, and that British manufactured goods were a monopoly of the East India Company's which consigned them to their care directly.

No sooner, however, was the navigation of the Gulf free from danger, than the natives secured it to themselves, and in regard to trade, no foreigners can compete with them. Nay, more; I shall show elsewhere that in other countries besides India, where the law is the same for all, and

where freedom and security exist, Europeans cannot contend with the natives, and are becoming merely their agents. I consider these explanations highly important, because any Frenchman seeing Mülhausen linen or woollen cloths from the south of France in the shops of Persia or Turkey would immediately suppose that nothing is more easy than to bring them thither and sell them. He would very soon meet with difficulties from which the strongest protection could not save him. He would be cheated, and could not appeal to justice, for if he took that course no one would do business with him.

When discussions arise between merchants, they appeal to their fellow tradesmen and abide by their decision. To go before the Cadi would be equivalent to shutting up shop. It is desirable also to avoid as much as possible any intimacy with the Governor, or those in authority, as no confidence is placed in any one who appears to be their friend. Merchants never go to see high personages, unless to transact business, or when politeness requires it on Fridays after prayers, or when they are sent for; and it is only when driven to the last extremity that they crave their protection. Now, it would be ridiculous for a foreigner to expect that those merchants, among whom he proposes to establish himself in order to carry on an active competition, would not league against him. Unless he humbles himself and becomes the agent of these merchants, sacrifices his independence, and covers them with the protection of his name, he is compelled to quit the country. Englishmen have

furnished proof of what I now advance, at Bushire, at Bagdad, and at Damascus; and I think it useful to insist on this point, in order to destroy, if it be possible, the illusions not only of private individuals, but of the government itself—as both indeed are too often misled by appearances.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Administration of Public Business at Bassora—Nature and character of the taxes—Manner of levying them—Smuggling.

HAVING given an account of the agriculture and trade of Bassora and its environs, it will be easier to determine what revenue that country produces, not to its government, but to those who levy it. The proper way to form such an estimate is little known, for most travellers imagine that a Governor seizes at random the money of his neighbour and keeps it without accounting to any one. The thing is not so easy: indeed, robbery and extortion are organised in so complex a manner, that, with the exception of the Pacha of Egypt, there is perhaps no Pacha now-a-days who can enrich himself without accomplices. Mehemet Tchelebi was ever complaining that his partner had made a very bad bargain in renting Bassora at two hundred thousand Aïn piasters, or £16,000 a year. He assured me that this sum was barely covered by the taxes upon canals, and upon dates, and by the sale of

those belonging to government, by the *carratch*, or poll-tax upon individuals who were not Mahometans, by the farming of spirits and by the Custom House duties. The Customs' duties amounted to eight per cent on all sorts of merchandize; each horse was taxed as high as six pounds ten shillings when exported, the dates one piastre, or one shilling and eight pence per bag; and slaves were taxed at about thirty-two shillings per head. He also complained that opportunities for seizing arbitrarily the property of those under his administration seldom occurred: extortion, *djouroum*, that fundamental principle of Turkish government, did not prosper.

Most of the inhabitants, in fact, had other protectors than the Mutselim. The Mahometans of any importance were supported by the Sheikh of Zobeir; the British agent, Agha Barseigh, screened the Jews, and those who where considered as English subjects; I, for my part, defended the Christians, and a much persecuted race, who appear to have derived their religious opinions from ancient paganism, and are called Sabeans. Their number is very small, and they had left Bassora before I could inform myself respecting their religion. Lastly, if there was any unfortunate individual who was not included in the long list of *protégés*, he had recourse to the Pacha of Bagdad when ill-treated. Justice doubtless was not obtained without money, but as Mehemet Tchelebi never carried to account, but kept for himself all that came from this source, it did not cost much to obtain an order for restitution.

Another ground of complaint was smuggling. The duties on merchandize belonging to Europeans was rated at three per cent, and on that of Turkish subjects at eight; but as the duties imposed on the latter had become enormous ever since the Governor officiated as Custom House director and exaggerated the value of goods, the merchants determined to bargain with him, and to stipulate what they should pay before their goods entered Bassora. When they could not agree, the goods were landed at the small town of Mohamera, four leagues below Bassora, and there awaited a favourable opportunity either for going up the river above that city, or for being sent to Zobeir, and thence by land to Bagdad. It sometimes happened that the Governor, having made an arrangement of this kind, could not resist the temptation of taking the full duty on the goods when he had them under his thumb; the consequence was, that these private agreements ceased and made room for smuggling.

Mehemet Tchelebi, who was too eager after gain, committed another egregious error. A Custom House officer had made a seizure of goods to a considerable amount, and expected to be well rewarded; all that he got was the Governor's thanks, accordingly, since that period, goods were allowed to pass unmolested. I could not but be aware of these facts, for I received letters and newspapers from India, without any vessels having entered the harbour. However, as I take little heed of the lamentations of Mahometans, and was particularly desirous to ascertain

the real amount of the revenue of Bassora, I endeavoured to gain the best information possible, and discovered that there was raised thrice the amount for which the country was farmed, that is to say, six hundred thousand Aïn piastres, or forty-eight thousand pounds, which left the farmers of the revenue the respectable profit of thirty-two thousand pounds. This discovery proved of great importance to me. My presence alone was prejudicial to the interests of the English, without my having any such intentions, because I claimed the same privileges which they enjoyed. The protection granted to the Christians could not be very agreeable to the Mutselim; I had besides nothing to expect from our embassy at Constantinople, which was really unacquainted either with the capital or the provinces; consequently I had to protect myself, or else I should have been persecuted by the Governor. I was not possessed of sufficient wealth to purchase his protection, and it was requisite that he should fear me. In all their transactions with Europeans, the Mahometans are solely prompted by either fear or cupidity; and I lay it down as a maxim, that it is more advantageous to be on bad terms than on good with the authorities. When in any of these countries a Consul is insulted behind his back, when he is called a fool or a devil; epithets which Turks are very fond of bestowing upon Franks; it may be looked upon as a sure sign that his affairs and those of the country he represents are in a much more favourable position, than when his good nature and generosity are extolled.

The very first time I had occasion to be dis-

pleased with Mehemet Tchelebi, I sent a memorandum of his receipts to his partner, the Custom House officer at Bagdad. I told him, (though this was more than the fact) that I had sent a copy to my correspondents at Constantinople, with the request that, if they did not hear from me within a given period, that is to say, by the time I could have obtained satisfaction, they would lay it before the Sader-azam. I took the liberty of pointing out to him, that the piastres which he and his partner pilfered, were not the piastres of Constantinople, the value of which amounted to about five pence, but Aïn piastres which were worth forty; that his Excellency, the Grand Vizier, had perhaps never contemplated, even in his dreams, so considerable a sum; and that he would no doubt attempt to appropriate it to himself, especially as he had only to send for that purpose a Capidji-bachi who would cost him nothing. My letter produced the desired effect, and I not only obtained greater tranquillity, but had a right to conclude that I was not far from the mark in my calculations.

However, it was not without trouble that the poor Governor collected the imposts; in order to get ready money, or perhaps to make a parade of his poverty, he let out almost all the sources of revenue; part of the sum agreed upon was advanced, and the farmer, invested with a robe of honour, proceeded to the exercise of his functions. A poor devil one day begged Saalï Sassoun, the Jew merchant to whom I had been recommended, to obtain for him the situation of collector of

the *caratch*, and to advance the requisite sum for the appointment. He succeeded, persecuted both Jews and Christians in order to levy contributions, repaid Saali Sassoun, and then decamped with his profits. The Governor's rage was great ; he talked of selling the culprit's wife and children, but he durst not, neither would he have found purchasers. This man who had gone no further than Mohamera, returned a short time afterwards, having settled the business. Nothing is easier among Turks, and they employ three different ways for effecting this ; the *kater*, the *rija* and the *zor*.

The first consists in procuring the intercession of some one who is in favour with the chief, or in such a relative position to him that he cannot be refused, as was the case when the agent of Mecca interceded in my house in favour of the slave ; this is done out of pure friendship, or from consideration (*kater*) and nothing is paid for the trouble. The *rija* is not so economical, but is much oftener resorted to. It consists in a sort of bargain, and in order to gain the object the petitioner has in view, he has to bribe a person who has access to the Governor, to make the necessary terms with him. Those who make the *rijas* are well known, and much courted. That man's fortune is made, who can have access to a powerful Pacha, and talk to him in private whenever he pleases. With regard to the *zor* or main force, it is not every one who can employ it. At Bassora, Mehemet Ben Tajib was the only person who had a right to have recourse to it. Agha Barseigh and I, in our capacity of

foreign agents, could appeal to treaties which I must confess however were but a feeble resource; but he belonged to the country, and being perfectly acquainted with the position of every person, he generally had recourse to the *rijas*, whereas I resorted to the *kater*.

No sooner had the collector of the *caratch* returned, than the lessee of the impost on horses imitated his example; afterwards, the *tuffendji-bachi* and almost all the authorities successively absconded. These people generally returned after a certain time, or sought their fortunes elsewhere. I then fully comprehended that Ali Usta's conduct, which so much surprised me, when he gave me an account of his adventures at Bombay, was really not after all so very extraordinary; that all those functionaries who fled from Alexandria to Constantinople, and from Constantinople to Alexandria, during the quarrels between the Porte and Mehemet Ali, and whom indignant Europe loaded with reproaches, were doing no more than was quite customary in their country.

A public functionary in Turkey should be nimble footed; were he to punctually discharge his obligations, it would be supposed that he was making enormous profits: if he were not to fulfil his engagements, he would be required to produce his accounts, which however cannot be examined without the aid of arithmetic. A person whose conduct is to be investigated is thrown into prison, and no sooner is it known that he is under lock and key, than denunciations pour in against him. Every one comes to complain, and most frequently with justice, of the extortions to which he has been

subjected. Presently the inquiry is changed for the bastinado; then torture is applied, which consists in squeezing the forehead with a rosary formed of wooden balls, the extremities of which are twisted with a stick; the flesh is scorched with red hot irons, and the points of knives are thrust under the finger-nails. The sufferer is forced to confess where he has concealed the money, and to promise to pay a certain sum. The *rija* is then resorted to, and the unfortunate man sometimes quits his prison to resume his former functions, or to beseech his friends to assist him to pay the sum which he has promised.

It may be set down, as a matter of course, that complainants never receive any indemnity; nay, it frequently happens, if their victim again finds favour, that they are forced out of fear to furnish him with the means of recovering his liberty. No public functionary is so exalted as not to be liable to similar treatment. Dervish Agha, successor to Ali Usta, experienced the like fate; he was forced to sell all that he possessed; he was not even permitted to retain the shawl which formed his turban: beaten, tortured, and ruined, he escaped almost naked from the province which he had administered, and reached Mohamera. There he found means to return to Bagdad, and was appointed Governor of another province.

Of all the collectors, he who exerted himself most was the farmer of the duty on slaves. As it was much easier to land and to conceal them, than horses or other merchandise, it was found requisite to keep a sharp look-out from Bassora to the mouth of the river. In order to effect this, the Turks had

established a post of Aïtas at Devassir, on the right bank, where it was absolutely useless; for if ships had anything to conceal, they kept along the opposite shore. Very often, however, they would not even take this trouble; for as the soldiers were ill paid, they had no scruple in shutting their eyes on receiving a trifling present. Moreover, their commanding officer was not one of those docile fellows who punctually execute the orders that are given to them. He was called Ben-Mezra (the son of the lance), and it might justly be said that he was one of the most daring robbers who had ever descended from the mountains of Albania. He had acquired by his courage a very high reputation amongst his countrymen who amounted to about thirty. The merchant-governor, Mehemet Tchelebi, felt ill at ease whenever he saw him enter the divan, armed from top to toe, at the head of his men. So far from reproaching him he was too happy to get rid of him, by giving him such employments as kept him out of the town, and by making him presents.

The trade in slaves was one of great importance. Although many are bought on the shores of the Red Sea, Muscat may be considered as the mart where they are chiefly disposed of; for besides the Abyssinians brought thither by vessels from Jeddah and Mocha, a great many blacks are imported from the east coast of Africa. It was not for this reason, probably, that the Asiatic Society of London named the Imaum one of its honorary members, as an enemy of slavery.

The slaves suffer a great deal, during the voyage from the privations which they have to undergo,

and it is estimated that one-fourth of them die from this cause. The Asiatics only purchase girls and young boys; and it is computed that about four thousand are annually landed at Muscat, and three hundred at Bassora. The remainder are taken to various ports to be thence dispersed in the interior of Asia. It is impossible to affirm that they are well or ill treated, as this depends entirely upon the humour of their masters; but it is customary to emancipate them, and to get them married as soon as they are of age: I know several who hold a very respectable station in society.

It appears, from an event of which I was an eye-witness, that it is not very difficult to pass for a slave. An Arab, who had gone to Bombay, returned with a young Hindoo, who was to enact that part. One day a Turkish colonel paid me a visit, and informed me that he had purchased a slave, and sent for him in order that I might see him. I immediately recognised him as a Hindoo, and told the purchaser that that child could not be sold. As he had paid £16 for him, he became very uneasy; and having made the necessary inquiries, he learned that the boy had already been sold several times, and always left his masters on the plea of his being a British subject; he was in partnership with the man who sold him. The colonel was obliged to take many steps before he could recover his money, for the young rascal became the slave of one of the Pacha's favourites, in order that he might not be forced to make restitution.

The slaves, at any rate, are much better treated than those in our colonies; and I am quite ashamed to own that, in this respect, we Christians

are much more barbarous than the Mahometans. The British government throws no serious impediments in the way of this trade, and I am by no means disposed to blame it; yet no one can approve of its juggling endeavours to make people believe the contrary. During my residence in India, several treaties made with Princes, who had no right to conclude them, tending apparently to abolish slavery were published with great ostentation. To carry these conventions into effect is dangerous, and almost impracticable; if put into force, the slave trade of the Asiatics, instead of frequently proving advantageous to the slaves themselves, would become more horrible than that which is carried on by certain Europeans.

Besides the post established at Devassir, another had been placed at Corna, for the very same purpose: that of protecting the public revenue. Corna is admirably situated at the junction of the Euphrates and the Tigris; it is surrounded by forests of date trees, and large vessels are able to reach it. During the time of their prosperity, the Dutch had a factory there. The town is small, and like Bassora has walls which enclose the gardens, and protect it as well against any irruptions of the Arabs as against inundations. The commanding officer was authorised to demand the custom-house receipts of vessels as they passed; but, like his brother officer at Devassir, he was very ill paid, and found it to be more advantageous to levy contributions on his own account.

All the impediments thrown in the way of com-

merce tend to augment smuggling; and in no country could it be more easily carried on, for it would be utterly impossible indeed to guard the vast extent of water, and the still more extensive Desert. I strove in vain to persuade the Governor that more moderation would have a beneficial effect; his province was in so admirable a position, that a little mildness and freedom would soon render it flourishing. Mehemet Tchelebi perfectly understood what I meant, but he could not change his conduct, as he easily demonstrated. His post was very precarious; the first comer who should have offered the Pacha a larger sum than his partner had engaged to pay would have been immediately appointed to succeed him. The disgrace of the head of the Customs would involve his own; and the favour which he enjoyed was not to be maintained but by dint of gold; he was therefore obliged to ruin the country, and that speedily, without waiting for the morrow. It was a speculation on his part, and he had no choice of means. What he then told me was the truth, not only in regard to Bassora, but it applied equally to the whole of the Turkish empire.

But the means of defence used against despotism and rapacity, were as clever as the attack. No one could think of seizing the immense wealth of the Arabs because it was concealed in the Desert, and thus escaped detection. When we consider that the Arabs never purchase anything, and always sell their products, we cannot be surprised that most of them are very wealthy; it is said that there are

tribes of marauders dependent on the great Anissé tribe, of which each member is worth a thousand pounds. The wealth of the Sheikhs of small towns is almost incredible; every thing is converted into money, and buried in the ground, in which treasures are not unfrequently found.

The Arab himself purchases nothing but his shirt, and never thinks of changing it until it falls to rags. His mantle, his turban, his sashes, every thing, including his dagger and lance, are manfuactured under his tent. The exchequer has no hold upon him. With regard to the merchants, they were at liberty to choose the spot which suited them the best to trade at in order to escape extortion.

The Chat-el-Arab, in its majestic course, is joined by a canal to the river Caron which descends from the mountains of Suziana, and falls into the sea at a short distance from the Euphrates. It is said that the air in this part of the Desert is more salubrious than elsewhere, and the junction of two rivers, one of which flows through Persia and the other through Babylonia and Syria, marks it as an important commercial point. This country, according to the treaty concluded between Persia and the Porte, towards the end of the last century, belongs by right to Turkey, but her authority is scarcely acknowledged. There are moreover religious motives which prevent her from exercising that influence which with her is so frequently a substitute for power. The country, in fact, is inhabited by Arabs of the Chahab tribe, who are followers of Ali, whilst the right bank of the river is entirely occupied by Sunnees. Now there is no religious toleration among those Arabs who do not

live in towns ; and an inhabitant of the right bank cannot cross over to the opposite side without great danger. These reasons, and the want of a naval force, have prevented the Turks from establishing their dominion there. It is true that the Sheikh of the Chahabs received his investiture from the Pacha of Bagdad ; but he pretended to be equally dependent on Persia, to the territory of which his domains extended.

By degrees a few huts were erected on the banks of the canal I made mention of above ; by and by more substantial buildings were to be seen, and finally the small town of Mohamera rose up as if by enchantment. The Sheikh of the Chahabs had established a chief there, and had taken care to grant as much freedom, and to impose as few taxes as possible. Besides the advantages which the merchants found in settling there, those of the Chiite sect enjoyed not only freedom of religion, but the still greater pleasure of repaying to the Sunnees the insults which they received from them in other places. Commerce, oppressed at Bassora, naturally removed to Mohamera, and the consequent vexation of Mehemet Tchelebi may easily be conceived. He endeavoured, however, in the beginning to carry things with a high hand, and issued an order to Jabber, a Sheikh of the Chahabs, and to Ahmed, Sheikh of the town, to abandon it immediately. They laughed at him, and he had no better success when threatening them with the Pacha's vengeance. To aggravate his mortification, the Sheikhs of Mohamera even took a malicious pleasure in sending him from time to time a memorandum of the goods landed there, that

he might calculate exactly the amount of his losses.

Unluckily, the Arabs do not confine themselves to jokes, and those of Mohamera forced the occupiers of the post at Devassir to return to Bassora, and leave the mouth of the river unobstructed. The "son of the lance" consequently returned with his brave followers, to throw himself upon the generosity, or rather the fears, of the poor Mutselim. However, as the Governor though a jovial good sort of fellow, was excessively fond of prating, and very passionate, he could not dissemble his rage, and vowed to take signal vengeance, for the injuries and the jeers to which he had been exposed. The inhabitants of Mohamera, apprized of his threats, replied to them by invading the date-tree plantations belonging to Bassora, and carrying off the agents appointed by the Governor to take care of them. The unfortunate Mutselim had no means of defence; the Pacha of Bagdad would not have allowed him to spend one farthing on such an object, and he possessed neither troops, arms, nor ammunition. He was forced to apply for assistance to the Sheikh of the Montefiks, and he referred him to Mehemet Ben-Tajib, the Sheikh of Zobeir, who took care to be well paid for the aid which he afforded. In fact, he took to himself the little authority which the Governor still retained in the town; but, by way of requital, he caused the Chahabs to withdraw, through the interference of the Sheikh of Gren in favour of Bassora.

In Turkey such confidence is placed in the reports of public functionaries, that no one believed the complaints transmitted from time to

time by Mehemet Tchelebi. In fact, he could neither write letters nor dispatch messengers when he thought proper; as these messengers were dependents of Ben-Tajib and of the Sheikh of the Montefiks, who were no friends to Mehemet Tchelebi, and would have intercepted his dispatches. Many a time have I enclosed his letters in mine, in order that they should reach their destination; but, in general, he was obliged to wait for the rare opportunities afforded by the couriers sent by the Residency to forward his dispatches. Notwithstanding the difficulties in which he was involved, his partner incessantly harassed him by issuing drafts which he was not able to pay. At length, deprived of the greater part of his revenue, scarcely master in his own palace, in vain expecting aid, and denounced on all sides, he determined to retire, and communicated his intention to the authorities of Bagdad. This done, he banished all care from his mind, married and gave himself up to pleasure, until he should find an opportunity for embarking. He had moreover seasonably chosen the time for executing his project, as the Pacha had set out on his expedition against the Bey of Revendouz; and he hoped to arrange with his partner before any thing was decided relative to the appointment of his successor.

On the announcement of the Governor's departure, his partisans resolved to follow his example, lest they should be left to the resentment of Ben-Tajib. Many persons, who had business at Bassora, also availed themselves of this opportunity, and prepared to follow him. Among the number was the Roman Catholic priest

Kaz Hanna, who dreaded the approach of the sickly season. He quitted his convent, and I installed myself therein, as it was much more spacious than my house, and afforded me the means of taking exercise without crossing the threshold.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Motives of Colonel Chesney's expedition—Its history—Russian agents—Prevailing diseases of Bassora.

MEANWHILE the time fixed upon for Colonel Chesney's experiment on the navigation of the Euphrates was fast approaching. Since the route by Suez has been adopted, this officer's bold enterprise has lost much of its interest; still it may not be useless to recapitulate the circumstances under which it was attempted; it will even serve for an example of extraordinary daring, and a proof of the perseverance and foresight of the British government. When it was determined on in London, the interior of Central Asia was known only by the work of Burnes, and a few scattered articles published in various reviews. All agreed in representing that Russia might seriously endanger British power in India by an alliance with Persia; and I am even persuaded that a chapter in the Travels of Burnes, who maintained this opinion, was suppressed at the instigation of the Court of Directors. The expedition which the Czar had been so long preparing in the Black Sea, while waiting for a pretext to direct it

against Constantinople; the offers of assistance which he made to the Sultan; and his desire to interfere in the quarrel between him and the Pacha of Egypt, which did not in reality at all concern him; betrayed a spirit of intrigue and an ambition, the effects of which the English ministry certainly feared. If the thirty thousand men which Russia assembled at great expense on the shores of the Black Sea had suddenly marched upon Constantinople, and that power had meanwhile collected an army of similar force on the Persian frontiers, and pushed it across Asia, it was to be feared that there would not be sufficient time to send out reinforcements, nor even to despatch orders to India. Communications had indeed been attempted by way of Suez, but neither steam-engines nor the construction of steam-vessels had then reached the perfection which they have now attained; and the experiments tried had not proved satisfactory. No one moreover then supposed that a steamer could weather the south-west monsoon. Had this route therefore been adopted, it would, according to the opinion then entertained, not have been practicable more than six months in the year. To transmit rapidly, and in all seasons dispatches to Bombay, and even to send troops, if necessary, was the chief object proposed. On the other hand the Court of Directors, that is the Indian government itself, was not very anxious to open communications, of which every body might take advantage, and which would bring its Asiatic possessions into contact, as it were, with Europe. The Directors considered the navigation of the Eu-

phrates very desirable, as it might be kept up all the year round, and would allow their correspondence to be transmitted almost as speedily as by Suez.

This plan involved other political advantages, which were not to be despised. They could hardly expect, in traversing Egypt, to divide, if one may so say, the dominions of the Pacha in two parts: to make partisans, and to rule there either by force or by interest. By navigating the Euphrates on the other hand, the case became wholly different, as the route would be through Arabia. They would then be opening communications with a new people, who in reality owned the sway of no sovereign; and if obliged to come to any decision respecting the pretensions of the Pacha of Egypt, and of the Sultan, Mehemet Ali's territories would lie on the right, and those of his liege lord on the left. The frontiers of their dominions would belong to the English. The correspondence of India, the news from Persia, brought by way of Bagdad, would not have to pass through either Alexandria or Constantinople; and it would not be spread all over the world until it was first known in England. In short, they wished to retain a monopoly which was valuable to them, and also important for the good administration and safety of their eastern empire.

As authors are prone to attribute to governments their own notions, I think it right to declare, in regard to the motives here assigned, that I have advanced nothing but what has resulted from the parliamentary inquiry which took place previously to the expedition; from the publications

of Mr. Peacock, secretary to the Court of Directors themselves, and from the conversations which I have had with Colonel Chesney and other well-informed persons. I know for certain that any emergency requiring the despatch of troops to India had been provided for; on the pretext of acting as an escort through the Desert, they would have been shipped at Malta, carried down the Euphrates to Bassóra, and thence shipped for Bombay. This course would have been easier than sending them through Egypt.

Colonel Chesney's plan was originally conceived by him during a journey in Syria, undertaken at the time he was serving with his regiment at Malta. He sailed down and surveyed the Euphrates with admirable perseverance, then traversed Persia, and arrived at Trebizond whilst I was there. I was struck with the novelty of his plan, and the evident facility of its execution. Having obtained the approval of the embassy at Constantinople, he started for London where his scheme was adopted by the Court of Directors. Even the Duke of Wellington whose judgment is so remarkable, and who is so perfectly acquainted with all the wants of India, acquiesced in their approval. William the Fourth also studied it with much interest, and expressed his desire to be made privately acquainted with the progress of the expedition.

"Remember," said he to the projector, "remember that England has daily need of fresh outlets for her industry; if she stands still, she must perish; and that those who discover

these new openings deserve her everlasting gratitude."

I relate these particulars to show that the point at issue was not a mere voyage of discovery, undertaken either through love of science or for glory; but that it was really a question of the greatest importance, out of which the events of 1840 sprung up as a consequence. What the public, and even certain representative assemblies, viewed as a struggle between two rival Turks, was in truth the solution of a momentous contest between England and Russia; a compromise which imparted no lustre to the honour of either of these powers, one of which sold itself to the other. During its progress neither Prussia nor Austria displayed very great sagacity; whilst France, abandoned by her natural allies, proved that her government alone thoroughly understood the question in all its bearings, and had no cause to blush, either for its ignorance or its duplicity.

It is not for me to record all the difficulties which Colonel Chesney and his officers encountered in transporting their boats and machinery across the Desert to the Euphrates. I am of opinion that this was the most arduous portion of their undertaking, more especially if, as I have been told, they had at the same time to overcome the ill-will of the authorities. We however learned at Bassora, that every obstacle had been surmounted, and that we might very soon expect the arrival of the travellers. At this period two strangers, said to be Europeans, arrived, during the night, at a khan in Bassora; and as they called for aniseed, and were rather noisy,

several questions were put to them. They said that they had letters for Franks; and as I was at the moment the only European in the country, I requested them to call upon me, presuming that they had letters of introduction to me. Two young men, of rather prepossessing appearance, but with features bronzed by the sun were ushered in; both of them spoke English, but whether with elegance and purity I could not judge; at any rate, I had never met with any Europeans who were such complete masters of the Oriental languages. One of them, who appeared to be the principal, and much older than his companion, informed me that his name was Mr. Brown. They pretended to belong to the Euphrates' expedition; and had disguised themselves as Mahometans in order to travel through these dangerous countries with greater safety. They were on their way they said to India, on a mission from their superior. I was surprised such clever Orientalists should be totally ignorant of French which is learned by every tolerably well educated person in England. I was still more surprised that they were not acquainted with the names of those who have gained the greatest celebrity in Europe by their knowledge of Eastern languages. As they informed me that they had been brought up in India, I concluded that they were the sons of Englishmen by women of the country; for I was not then aware that members of that caste never cultivate the sciences or literature. A few days afterwards these travellers departed; Mr. Brown borrowed of me a

small sum of money, which he promised to repay on his arrival at Bombay; but he never made his appearance in that city. When the expedition arrived, Dr. Helfer, a very eminent German who accompanied it, informed me that he had known Mr. Brown at Smyrna, where, under the name of Haïder Khan, he passed himself off for an Affghan Prince; that he had persuaded him to attend him as physician, and that Mr. Brown had set out before him having carried off a considerable sum. This incident would not be worthy of mention were it not that while at Madras some years afterwards, I was induced to make inquiries of the police magistrate on this subject, and the result was the strongest presumption that Mr. Brown was an Affghan, an agent of Russia, the same probably who afterwards kept General Nott blockaded at Candahar.

At last the expedition arrived at Bassora on the 17th of June, 1836, and I hastened to congratulate Colonel Chesney. I did so most sincerely, although Colonel Taylor's conduct had for a moment excited some suspicions of the immediate object of the enterprise. I had studied the details with great care, and although I knew the result aimed at, I did not imagine the projectors would flatter themselves that they should succeed all at once. My mistrust was directed to the future, not to the present. When I quitted Europe, the union between France and England rested upon a solid foundation. I had seen what respect was paid to our ambassador, Prince Talleyrand; and I knew how great was the influence he exercised

over the diplomatic body, of which he was the senior member. He showed, in fact, that if any English minister dared to enter the lists against him, he could render his fall inevitable. Lord Palmerston had quitted the Foreign Office; and his daring and jealous policy was succeeded by the prudent, firm, and moderate administration of the Duke of Wellington, whose friendly sentiments towards France since the peace were well-known. I could not therefore suppose that an enterprise executed under his direction could have the effect of depriving us, in Asiatic affairs, of those advantages to which our geographical position and prior relations unquestionably entitled us.

Colonel Chesney sent a Turkish officer to thank me. This man presented a melancholy instance of the fate which awaits Turks, sent abroad to receive a foreign education, on their return home. He was born at Smyrna, and his name was Seyd Ali Aga. He had been educated in Paris and London, whither he was sent by the Sultan. He told me that when he returned to his own country, and rejoined his family, his mother, who had been herself in Europe, and an uncle who resided with her, were constantly reproaching him, calling him infidel, on account of his foreign habits. His uncle did not despise him for what he had learned; on the contrary, he approved of his acquirements, provided he would employ them in duping Christians. His residence beneath the maternal roof was rendered at length so insupportable, that he was compelled to leave it. He then set out for Egypt. That great champion of civilization, Ibrahim Pacha, ordered

him to be bastinadoed, and he once more had recourse to flight. He happened to be at Bagdad when the expedition was passing close to that city, and he accompanied it by order of the Pacha. As we have seen, his European education was useless to him, except when brought to bear on European matters; and such an opportunity rarely occurs in Turkey. Those Mahometans who have received an education like our own are disliked by all of their creed, who look upon them as infidels, and the Christians keep them at a distance, because they do not renounce the privileges of true believers. Such however is not the case with Asiatic Christians, who are instructed in European arts and sciences; as such acquirements raise them both in the estimation of their own sect and in ours. The interpreter to the expedition afforded an instance of this. Mr. Rossem was born at Mossoul, of Chaldean parents; circumstances with which I am not acquainted carried him to Malta, where he studied English and the Eastern languages. He had relinquished almost all the habits of his country, and although he had become a Protestant, and his relations and fellow countrymen were highly incensed at his apostacy, he was nevertheless universally esteemed. Mr. Rossem afterwards accompanied Dr. Ainsworth in his travels, and was at a later period appointed British Vice-Consul at Mossoul. Nothing could be more injudicious than this nomination, excepting perhaps that of the Bishop of Jerusalem, although in any country but his own it would have been highly commendable.

I am not sufficiently acquainted with the construction of steam-boats to pass any opinion upon the *Euphrates* which brought Colonel Chesney and his companions. When I went on board, I was astonished at her dimensions; and although she drew but three feet of water, I could not understand how she had passed Bir, whence she came. A smaller steamer, called the *Tigris*, had been constructed, but she was lost under most melancholy circumstances. Whilst the steamers were at a very wide part of the river, they were caught by a sudden and violent squall; such was the force of the tempest, and so furious were the waves occasioned by it, that the vessel, though her engines were set to work, could not withstand the shock, and suddenly foundered. Almost all on board perished; and her commander, Mr. Lynch, was one of the first victims. Colonel Chesney, who happened to be on board at the time when the accident occurred, was fortunate enough to save his life by swimming.

I was not a little surprised to find a lady had been bold enough to share the perils of the expedition. Mrs. Helfer had accompanied her husband, who intended to rejoin Haïder Khan. The doctor was a distinguished naturalist, having especially directed his attention to the study of entomology and geology. He was an advocate of Hahnemann's medical system, and was I believe the first to introduce it on the banks of the Ganges. His talents attracted the attention, and secured the patronage of the Governor-General of India, who intrusted him with the command of several scientific mis-

sions. His fate was a melancholy one: in 1842 he was assassinated during a voyage to the Nicobar Islands, which he had undertaken by order of the Indian government.

The arrangements on board the *Euphrates* appeared to be well suited to the service in which she was engaged. There were separate cabins fore and aft, and a saloon for general use; every thing was kept in the greatest order; and, but for the want of space necessary for exercise, no dwelling at Bassora would have been so commodious. I doubt much whether the Governor of the town, with all his Arabs, could have taken her; for she was well armed, her guns being served by artillerymen who were trained in a very different manner from the Turks.

As the *Euphrates* required some repairs, Colonel Chesney endeavoured to procure wood and the necessary materials; but he found nothing suitable for the purpose, neither could he obtain workmen or provisions. It must be confessed that Bassora is absolutely destitute of naval stores. Colonel Chesney therefore resolved to push on to Bushire; and though he succeeded in reaching that port, and in returning therefrom, he admitted that he had been guilty of great imprudence in risking a flat-bottomed boat in the open sea; he had however held a consultation before he adopted this determination. He left Captain Estcourt, who was second in command, and Lieutenant Murphy, the astronomer to the expedition, at Bassora. Dr. and Mrs. Helfer embarked the same day for Calcutta, and Seyd Ali Agha was dispatched to the Sheikh of the Montefiks to explain away rather an unpleasant

incident which had occurred during the passage of the steamer.

I have often wondered at the singular notions entertained by foreigners who engage in the conquest of a country: attempting to subjugate people, who do not understand their object, and whose religion, laws, and customs are wholly different from their's. The invaders live at the expense of the country, scarcely troubling themselves to conceal their contempt for the inhabitants, by whom they firmly believe that they are adored. My own countrymen are not exempt from this failing, and I have many times heard them declare, that we were very much regretted in Egypt, in Italy, and in Germany: in fact in every place where the people have risen against us. I have no right, therefore, to be astonished when I find that similar notions are entertained by other nations. Colonel Chesney, for instance, imagined that the Arabs watched his operations with wonder and admiration, and took a lively interest in his success. The conversations which he had had with some chiefs might perhaps have led to this opinion, and he was not sufficiently acquainted with the character of the Orientals to be aware of their duplicity. He must consequently have been astonished, when passing Soug El Schiouq, to observe a number of Arabs advance into the river and attempt to stop the *Euphrates*. These poor people imagined that this operation was the easiest thing in the world. They were foiled, however; and began firing their muskets, so that the steamer was compelled to discharge a couple of shots, which

put them to flight. It was Seyd Ali Agha's business to explain this occurrence, and to take care of the stock of coals collecting at that spot; his title of *Seyd*, or descendant of the Prophet, was a sufficient safeguard; but his ignorance of Arabic, his European manners and his Turkish uniform, caused him to be looked upon with no favourable eye by his new hosts. I soon had a fresh proof of the feeling by which the Arabs were actuated.

M. Raymond, the son of our former Consul, having lost his father when very young, and being left without any fortune in his youth, thought of attempting something at Bassora. He quitted Bagdad, and set out on his journey, dressed, I know not why, in European costume, relying on his knowledge of the language and country. But it was not long before he was seized and bound hand and foot; nor could he regain his liberty till he had given satisfactory proofs that he had nothing whatever to do with the expedition. These facts, with many others which I shall cite hereafter, were known to the Colonel. Dr. Ainsworth, for instance, told me, that not being on board one day when the steamer started, he was obliged to proceed on foot, accompanied by an Arab, who attempted to attack him unawares, so that he was forced to put himself in a posture of defence. After this I might well be astonished on reading in the official accounts of the expedition, that it had been received with pleasure. The reverse, I am positive, was the case.

Captain Estcourt and Lieutenant Murphy remained at Bassora to make various scientific

experiments, and to determine the exact position of the town by astronomical observations. The pendulums employed by them had already been used in voyages of circumnavigation, and the glasses of their telescopes were of the best kind made in Paris. I never learned what results were obtained; for if their observations were completed, the calculations were not made at Bassora, nor have I ever seen them published. The experiments on gravity were made with two pendulums of different lengths, and a good glass showed the exact moment when they agreed, whilst the time was given by a well regulated chronometer. The position of the place was ascertained by lunar distances. These last observations were on the point of being interrupted, for want of proper oil; that of the palm tree, which is generally used by the inhabitants, gives so flickering a flame, that it could not be employed to light the instrument. It was only after long search that I found a few drops of olive oil. There is no country where the firmament is clearer at night, or where the stars shine with greater brilliancy; consequently there was no fear of clouds or fogs.

It has often been remarked that in southern latitudes the twilights are of short duration; but no where have I seen this phenomenon so marked as at Bassora and Bagdad. In India, when the sun rises or sets, clouds are now and then perceptible. This is never the case at Bassora; daylight diminishes while the sun still remains above the horizon; the orb is entirely visible, but it assumes a reddish hue. As soon as his last ray dis-

appears, night comes on; but not the night of Europe; where the stars, even after the finest day, can scarcely break through the hazy atmosphere; but a night softly illumined by the firmament and rendered brilliant by falling stars shooting across the Heavens in all directions. Seated every evening on our terrace, we enjoyed this magnificent sight while resting after the fatigue of the day.

Summer was now come, and the heat surpassed all conception. The mornings were tolerably cool, but the sun became very powerful towards nine o'clock, and then it was necessary to keep within doors; from that time till four or five in the afternoon, the thermometer stood at 116° Fahrenheit (47° centigr.) in the shade. Wood-work cracked; and the handling of any article of furniture, iron, glass, or other substances usually cold to the touch, was attended with an unpleasant sensation occasioned by their intense heat. Unless a glass was constantly kept filled with water to supply the loss caused by evaporation, the latter would become so hot that you could not drink it. Glasses however are not generally used, as the inhabitants drink out of small earthen jugs; and water is kept in porous jars, which are suspended in the shade where there is a current of air. In this manner liquids may be kept perfectly cool; but the result is not uniform, as much depends upon the strength and the direction of the wind. If it comes from the north, the water is quickly cooled, but not so when the wind blows from the south.

I took some of these jars with me to Bombay; but they were useless during the south-west monsoon, and the reason seems to me to be clear

enough. The north wind reaches Bassora after crossing the Desert, and is not impregnated with moisture like the south wind which blows over the sea. At Bombay, the south-west wind, which has crossed over a large expanse of water bringing rain along with it, is mostly damp and cool. It struck me that a tube made of the Bagdad clay which is employed in the manufacture of these vessels would form a very accurate hygrometer. By filling it with water, introducing a thermometer into it, and comparing its height with that of another thermometer placed outside, the rate of evaporation might be calculated. It would be necessary to employ distilled water for this experiment; as that of the river is seldom pure, and always contains sand, which insinuates itself into the pores of the vessels, and after a certain time utterly destroys their cooling properties. I have seen the jars which are manufactured in Spain, in Egypt, and in India, but none of them possess the qualities of those made at Bagdad: they are in consequence largely exported, and to distant countries.

The quantity of water drunk in Arabia is incredible: as soon as a visitor is seated, he asks for water; after coffee he asks for more, and he rarely leaves till he has swallowed three or four mugsful, each equal to the contents of a large tumbler. In fact, the transpiration is so great there that one is always thirsty. While the south wind prevails, the water cannot be kept cool, and every one feels unwell. This wind brings along with it clouds of dust, and causes a general prostration of the human frame; the very brutes

appear to feel its effects. The birds may be seen, with open beak, seeking shelter wherever they can find it from the scorching rays of the sun; quitting their retreats with reluctance when forced to go in quest of food. The horses neigh, and are restless; during the night the cries of the jackall are shriller and more prolonged than usual, and the hair on a cat's back stands on end. It is at this period that numerous reptiles, such as serpents, scorpions, and centipedes, prefer to issue from their hiding places.

There are several species of serpents at Bassora, and they are very numerous in consequence of the humidity of the soil; they live in the canals where they find other reptiles on which they feed. Here are found the water-snakes, of a yellow colour with brown spots and white belly; the two-headed snake, the head of which appears to differ from the extremity of the tail only in having two small black eyes, which are scarcely perceptible. But the most common is a grey viper, about a half a yard long, which glides with extreme rapidity between the bricks in walls, in search of sparrows' nests. It is a very curious sight to watch these birds assembling in hundreds, and shrieking when they perceive their enemy.

I never at such times observed the power of fascination which is attributed to the serpent; on the contrary, I have seen the sparrows flutter round their foe, and endeavour to scare and drive him away. Others flew violently at him, pecked him with their bills, wounded him, and made him fall. Some became victims to their courage; but very often they were successful. I ascertained that

this serpent is venomous, although it has no fangs, for I saw one enter a nest where it instantly killed five young sparrows. It was caught immediately, and I examined its jaws, and can therefore bear witness to the fact. The season of the year when one experiences that uneasy feeling to which I have adverted, and when these reptiles are to be seen, is however the most healthy; the south winds cease in September, and then commence the diseases brought on by the great *shamal* which blows from the north-west. The south wind which is salubrious for the towns, produces the *simoon* in the Desert.

Colonel Chesney's expedition lost several of its members; but Captain Estcourt, who had the fever on his arrival, recovered in a few days. Mr. Murphy, having completed his observations, was apprised that Colonel Chesney would soon return and try to ascend the river. He packed up his instruments and held himself in readiness to start, and then made some excursions in the neighbourhood of the town. Like all new comers, he despised precautions, and went out to bathe at noon with his head exposed to the sun. One day he returned with a fever, which never left him for six days, and then terminated fatally. He continued to doze all the time, although the brilliancy of his eyes indicated irritation of the brain. His disease arose, I imagine, from cerebral congestion, and he never rallied till the approach of death, when he uttered a few incoherent words in French, the only language he used during his illness, and which he was completely master of from long residence at Paris. His death was a great loss, not only to the expedi-

tion but to his country, where he was greatly esteemed, and where he had assisted in preparing the great map of England. Both Captain Estcourt and myself regretted him much. He was a young man of great general information, and of the most amiable disposition, and his loss left a blank in our little circle. Almost alone in a barbarous country, I must confess, that in spite of my philosophy, this sudden and unexpected death made a gloomy impression on my mind. Lieutenant Murphy was buried in the Armenian Church at Bassora with every mark of respect; all the Christians attended the ceremony; and his countrymen have since sent out a marble monument which has been placed over his grave.

Instances of sudden death are of frequent occurrence at Bassora, and are ascribed to the unwholesome exhalations; but in the cases of Europeans, they are generally caused by the excessive heat. At least one half of those who have settled there have fallen victims to the climate, and but three persons are known who were not obliged to leave the place after a very short residence; namely, Mr. Manesty, Colonel Taylor, and the last of the French missionaries. A priest going one day in a boat to visit Mrs. Manesty, who was a Catholic, was seized with congestion of the brain. A person employed by the British Resident, going out after breakfast, and exposing himself to the sun, was attacked by brain fever, and committed suicide. Whenever I went to see Mr. Murphy, during these excessive heats, I was obliged to adopt the Arab costume, and to wear an enor-

mous turban; but in spite of these precautions, the veins of my neck swelled; the carotid arteries seemed ready to burst; my temples throbbed; and my ears rung, as it were, with a confused noise of trumpets and clarions. On my return home, I hastened to the dark cellar, in which the inhabitants of Bassora are accustomed to seek shelter from the mid-day heat. It is termed *sardap*, and has no window; a sort of chimney, which is built as high as possible, creates a current of air. Its occupants are only roused from complete inaction by the mosquitoes, which also find their way thither, and against which they are obliged to wage war. It is impossible even to sleep, for the very mattress when you remain too long upon it, becomes heated, and causes considerable irritation. Were it not the custom to receive visitors in the *sardap*, one's only employment would be to perspire and drink water.

The temperature is very agreeable in the evening, at night, and in the morning; and these hours are spent on the terraces where the inhabitants sleep. But besides the mortality directly occasioned by the heat of the sun, there are other diseases attributable to the climate. When the mountains of Armenia, whence flow the two great rivers of Mesopotamia, feel the influence of the sun's rays, and the snow upon them melts, inundations follow and extend over the whole Desert; and in order to protect them against these inundations, the towns and villages are surrounded with dykes, which besides serve as means of defence. The canals for irrigating the land in the vicinity of Bassora are then transformed into impetuous torrents; villages and

even towns are sometimes destroyed, and forests of date trees are swept away. The current of the river is so strong as to counteract the effect of the tide. It is then that these great canals, which are said to have been dug by the ancients, and which carry off the superfluous waters directly to the sea, are found to be of immense utility.

These inundations are not of long duration—the evaporation being very great upon so extensive a surface, exposed as it is to the vertical rays of the sun. Vegetable substances and the carcases of animals which have been washed down by the current, are left high and dry; these decay and spread around a noxious effluvium, which is carried to Bassora, by the north-west wind that sets in very soon afterwards. Such at least is the opinion current in the country, and adopted by European travellers; I shall however take the liberty of making some remarks on this head, for it strikes me that the principles of general physics, when applied to medical questions, often tempt people to start theories, which are hardly capable of demonstration. Let us then inquire if the insalubrity of Bassora be attributable to the inundations of the river. These inundations take place around Bagdad in the same manner as at Bassora; and we do not hear of their causing epidemic there. Mohamera and Zobeir, as well as Bassora, are situated to windward of the marshes, and yet their climate is very salubrious. The shores of Arabia and those of the Persian Gulf are not exposed to inundations, and are nevertheless unhealthy. The inhabitants of Bushire suffer very little, yet that town is exposed to inundations, whereas every other point is visited by the same

scourge as Bassora; and no European has been able to live at Muscat, the dryest and hottest place in the world. No one complains of the climate of Mocha or of Jeddah, although they are both very dry and barren spots. Can it be vegetation which causes such deadly effluvia? That hypothesis is exposed to similar anomalies. Bassora and Bagdad are fertile; but the contrary is the case with Bender Abbaz, Muscat and Zobeir; consequently salubrity does not depend upon barrenness.

It would doubtless be very desirable to be able to ascertain *a priori* the salubrity of a country in the same manner as we do that of a house. But when people attempt to ascribe the healthiness or unhealthiness of a place to general causes; to currents of air borne from a great distance, and to effluvia which are imperceptible to the senses, I am inclined to be sceptical. I should rather ascribe the insalubrity of Bassora to the gases arising from the forests of date trees that surround the town, which even penetrate into the houses, rather than to the decomposition of animal substances which takes place several miles distant from the town, and the emanations of which are widely dispersed in the air. My observations as to the sanitary state of the cities named above, would agree better I believe with this last theory. I must however state, that the climate of Bassora was not, it is said, so much dreaded formerly. The extent of the inundations naturally depends on the undulations of the soil; they spread very much near Lemloun, where the water filled a deep valley evaporating but slowly. The Pacha of Bagdad allowed the Sheikh six thousand

pounds yearly for the construction of a dyke; but as the Pacha afterwards preferred keeping his money, the Sheikh ceased to repair the dyke, and the climate since then has become more unhealthy. Let this observation be worth what it may, when I consider that the diseases of this country are mentioned in "the Arabian Nights," I cannot help thinking that they ought not to be ascribed either to the Sheikh or to the Pacha.

Whatever might have been the cause, we soon saw all around us fall sick. A non-commissioned officer, who had aided Lieutenant Murphy in his observations, gave us the same uneasiness as his superior; and the servants were in succession confined to their beds. Captain Estcourt, being deprived of his cook, was obliged to take his meals with me for several days; till I, in my turn, found myself obliged to apply to my neighbours to cook my dinner; at last we were forced to send to the bazaar and purchase our victuals ready dressed.

M. Raymond, who acted as my interpreter, was one of the first among the inhabitants to be attacked by fever; it was generally of an intermittent nature, but frequently assumed a more serious character. I have remarked that during these diseases intestinal worms infest the stomach. If any faith may be placed in the experience of the Arabs, emetics in these cases are very dangerous. I have even seen these worms crawl out of the mouth of patients when exhausted and insensible; in some instances they threw up considerable quantities of them, about three inches long, and so intwined together as to form a kind of ball.

The captain of an English vessel had embarked a number of horses for India at this season; when off Muscat the heat became intolerable, and a great number of his horses died. Desirous to ascertain the cause of the mortality, he opened one of them, and found an immense quantity of worms gnawing the animal's liver; I do not know whether they were of the same species as those mentioned above.

Captain Estcourt at length resolved to remove into the country, and shortly afterwards Dr. Ainsworth arrived from Bushire, but too late to render Lieutenant Murphy assistance. He did not come by the river, but landed at Gren, and thence crossed the Desert.

At last Colonel Chesney returned to Bushire, and then took up his quarters at Mohamera, at the confluence of the Caron and the Euphrates. The air there was purer, the water more limpid, and it may easily be presumed that the mortality of Bassora caused him to keep aloof from that town. He neglected certain precautions, however, which were the more important, because the local government could not but feel offended at his non-observance of them. Mohamera was in open rebellion against the Mutselim of Bassora, who was the legal representative of Turkey, which power had granted the *firmans* for navigating the Euphrates. Whatever the real position of this Mutselim might be, however small the consideration he deserved, it was an insult to him for Colonel Chesney to establish himself in a hostile town, without even notifying such an intention; and to choose for the centre of his operations a spot, the prosperity of which, right or

wrong, the government wished to destroy. It was still worse to make conventions with the rebel Sheikh of Mohamera, and to promise him the protection of Great Britain.

Colonel Chesney made various experiments to ascertain the most expeditious way of transmitting news to Europe. The following is the usual mode. If you despatch a courier from Bassora, he goes no farther than Bagdad. From that place another is sent to Aleppo or Damascus, from whence the sea coast is soon reached. This courier is furnished by the Sheikh of Zobeir; he is paid eight pounds to go to Bagdad, and on his arrival he receives presents from those for whom he has letters; he performs the journey on horseback, and is seven or eight days on the way; proceeding direct to Soug-el-Schiouq, where he takes the left bank of the Euphrates as far as Hillah, and then crosses the Desert to Bagdad. As these expresses are very expensive, they are seldom sent, and several months sometimes elapse without any news being received. When the Mutselim is on bad terms with the Sheikhs through whose territories the road lies, he dares not send any, lest his correspondence should be intercepted; consequently the messengers dispatched at irregular intervals by the Resident, are the only channel of communication.

The Jews alone dispatch a messenger at a fixed period once a year: this is at the Feast of Tabernacles. According to the Old Testament, they must offer at the altar a fruit without blemish; and for this purpose they procure at a great expense, the musk-citrons of Bahrein, which have an exquisite perfume, and are forwarded by express to

Bagdad. The ordinary route to Aleppo or Damascus is very circuitous. Colonel Chesney attempted to send direct from Gren, under the belief that Mr. Manesty forwarded his dispatches from that place during his temporary absence from Bassora. He could not have been aware that Mr. Manesty, while absent, left an Armenian agent named Petros, who, during that period, sent expresses as before by way of Zobeir. The Sheikh of Gren, tempted by Colonel Chesney's liberal offers, undertook to see his wishes carried into effect, but never sent any one direct to Damascus; his messenger went as usual to Zobeir, and then followed the ordinary route without entering Bagdad. He was a considerable time before he returned.

Colonel Chesney purposed trying another plan. The mail was to be landed at Mohamera, to be sent across the Euphrates from that place to the right bank, and forwarded direct to Damascus; or to follow the left bank and go up to Bagdad in case the first route should be closed; both courses were impracticable. The inhabitants of Mohamera being of the Shia sect, could not with safety enter the territory of the Sunnees; besides, although a dromedary can during the winter do very well without water—from the banks of the Euphrates as far as Damascus or Aleppo—it could not do so in summer. Such were the obstacles to the direct route from Mohamera to Damascus. If the route by Bagdad had been chosen, the messenger would have been stopped by the inundations of the river, which make an island of Mohamera during a great portion of the year, and by the swamps which are formed on several parts of the left bank of the Tigris.

The impracticability of these schemes had been discovered by the Colonel's predecessors. Mr. Manesty had tried all possible means to establish direct overland communications, at a time when war made this an object of the utmost importance. His private interest was moreover deeply concerned, as the following incident proves. He one day received a packet with instructions not to spare either pains or money in forwarding it to India. Being authorized to trade on his own account, he had a vessel in the harbour which was ready to set sail. He opened the negociation by offering a certain sum of money in his official capacity for the immediate dispatch of the vessel; to which letter he himself replied in his quality of merchant, stipulating the conditions, which he finally accepted as Resident. A copy of this curious correspondence was sent to the authorities; and it is said that this agreement put a large sum into his pocket.

In those times of warfare, the French and English agents did not scruple to intercept each other's correspondence, and it required great tact to effect the safe transmission of letters. Mr. Manesty had tried every kind of expedient, and had even made use of the Wahabees, yet he found that after all the ordinary channel was the best. Colonel Chesney ought not, therefore, to have expected that as a perfect stranger he could effect more than that Resident, no matter what energy he might display. The Colonel certainly possessed this quality in a high degree, as was shown by his conduct amidst the annoyances he experienced and the tergiversations of his government.

The perseverance and consistency which distin-

guished the Duke of Wellington's administration, ceased on his retirement from office. The Whig ministry weak at home, and obliged to court popularity: one day bent on great undertakings, on the morrow alarmed at the consequences which they might produce, had really no steady line of policy. On their accession to power, they found every thing prepared for the Euphrates' expedition. The funds had been voted, the most troublesome part of the business was accomplished, all was ready for starting, when on a sudden they issued orders recalling those engaged in it. The feelings of mortification experienced by those who had taken so much trouble to ensure its success may easily be conceived on finding themselves thus stopped just as they were reaching the goal. Colonel Chesney advanced £2000 out of his own pocket; his companions clubbed together and gave up their pay; and instead of obeying their orders to stop, they proceeded onwards and reached Bassora.

The news of their success arrived at Bombay, and Colonel Chesney resolved to wait at Mohamera for instructions from the Indian government. That government had dispatched several officers to sound and explore the mouth of the Euphrates; but whether this step was taken in anticipation of a change in the management of the expedition, or merely with the view of aiding Colonel Chesney in his undertaking, I have no means of determining. One of these officers having attempted to go up the Caron, and reach Bushire by that route, was robbed of all he had with him, and received a wound of which he soon afterwards died. The

second, Mr. Grieve was to take charge of the correspondence, whilst a third, Mr. Jenkins, who came shortly after the departure of the expedition, was to explore a somewhat different route.

The operations of the Colonel which it was believed had been stopped, could not under these circumstances be exactly foreseen; he determined to go to Corna, and there await a solution.

Although the accidental sojourn of Europeans somewhat relieved the monotony of my life, I was generally alone, and at last, like the rest of them, was taken ill in the month of September. Colonel Chesney invited me to accompany him to Corna for change of air, and I readily accepted his offer; but the receipt of dispatches obliged him to start for Bagdad, so suddenly that I was not informed of this determination till the day before his departure. Owing to the state of my health, I was glad to quit Bassora for any other place on earth, and I at once resolved to accompany him. The Governor, Mehemet Tchelebi had already put his plan into execution, and had just embarked. Overnight I took leave of the Deputy-Governor, who like myself was very ill. I found him in bed, in a paroxysm of fever, and he implored me with intense fervour to do every thing in my power to injure Mehemet Tchelebi, in order that he might himself retain the post, until he should have amassed such a sum as would enable him also to decamp. He assured me that he was at heart a friend to Ali Usta, whom he longed to rejoin.

CHAPTER XV.

BAGDAD.

Voyage from Bassora to Bagdad—Asker Pacha—Davoud Pacha's administration—Commerce and manufactures of Bagdad.

The steamer left Bassora towards the end of September, but was compelled to stop opposite to the Resident's country-seat in order to bury one of the crew who had died of fever. Continuing our voyage to Corna, we there took in coals. In a very few hours we overtook the Mutselim, whose flotilla we perceived on the opposite side. We reached Kout Hamara, about half way to Bagdad, in three days, although the river was unknown to us, and we were frequently obliged to seek our way among sand-banks; besides it was the season of the year when the river is very shallow. It was impossible to calculate exactly how long it might have taken us to go from Kout Hamara to Bagdad, because we were frequently obliged to stop to cut wood, which was too green to produce the necessary heat. We found, however, as an approximative result, that it would take about four days to ascend from Bassora and three to descend. Nothing can be

more monotonous than this route, between uniform banks, with nothing to relieve the eye, and where, on either side, nothing is to be seen but a line of shrubs and a vast plain beyond. Sometimes we saw tents, and steered towards them to procure milk or other provisions, but it was not without difficulty that we succeeded. When wood was required to be cut, the Arabs generally refused to do it; and when the crew were employed in this service it was necessary to keep a sharp look out lest they should be attacked. Promises were repeatedly made by the natives, but never kept; and it happened more than once that we looked in vain in the morning for the camps, the chiefs of which had the day before promised us assistance; they had fled during the night.

I do not doubt that, had they dared, they would have attacked us; but a vessel impelled without oars or sails, and emitting a dense black smoke, appeared to them a production of hell: and many of them asked us in right earnest whether we were good or evil spirits; whether we were the offspring of angels or of the devil. I am of opinion that they were rather inclined to the more favourable view, for they were not a little astonished at our peaceable conduct. Had the first steamer ever seen on the Seine or the Thames been manned by Arabs, we may be sure that they would have made themselves notorious for misdeeds of every kind; and that the banks of those streams would not have been a safe or tranquil place of abode. Judging, therefore, of others by themselves, every tribe fled at our approach, and avoided all communication with us. Whenever we

passed by any inhabited spot, the population pursued us with insults. It was very amusing to see this motley crowd as they ran; and the admirer of the picturesque would most certainly never have forgotten this scene. Men, some clad, others naked, women, children, and horses, rushed forth pell-mell to look at us, and when we had passed, scampered off to some other point where the winding of the river afforded them another opportunity of gratifying their curiosity. As they were armed only with spears, we heeded their hostile demonstrations but little; but several times they threw stones at us; and if they had had muskets, I dare say they would have used them without scruple. They looked upon themselves as very fortunate that we did not take advantage of our superiority, and plunder and levy contributions on them: a duty which they would most assuredly have performed had they been in our place.

As we were sometimes obliged to stop for want of fuel, some of us on these occasions went out shooting, and succeeded in bagging a great quantity of heath-cocks; but we saw very few other birds, excepting fishing-eagles and herons, which were very numerous on the banks of the river. Hares are in great plenty, and there is a multitude of wolves and wild boars in the woods, which likewise harbour lions, whose roarings are heard at night, and jackalls, that keep one awake by their howling. We did not see any antelopes, although I know that the Desert abounds with them, for they were often sent as presents to me at Bassora. One morning we observed a black hyæna which fled on our approach. The

musquitoes waged an obstinate war against us during this voyage; and it is almost impossible to conceive the myriads that intruded into our cabins every evening. In the daytime we were tormented by large flies, armed with a sting, penetrating through one's clothes. I counted one hundred and twenty of these killed by a sailor, whom they attacked during his turn at the wheel. The dragon-flies that skimmed the surface of the water, and fed upon all the various species of *tipulæ*, were consequently looked upon by us as very good friends.

Notwithstanding all these inconveniences, I was very comfortable on board; not only was my health improving, but I enjoyed the society of persons remarkable for attainments and agreeable manners. Captain Estcourt was second in command to Colonel Chesney; Lieutenant Cleveland of the royal navy directed the navigation of the steamer, having under him two other officers, Messrs. Fitzjames and Charlewood; Dr. Ainsworth had charge of the medical department, and Mr. Rossem acted as interpreter. Every morning as soon as the anchor was weighed, Colonel Chesney took up his station in the forecastle, where he noted down the time by a chronometer; the direction of the compass; the appearance of the country, and the soundings; in short, all the data which might aid in drawing up as accurate a map as possible of the course of the river. Lieutenant Cleveland mounted on one of the paddle-boxes, and sheltered by a small tent, passed nearly the whole of the day in directing the course

of the vessel. Each had his occupations, while I often resorted to the well-selected library which was on board.

It was not our fate, however, to reach Bagdad without mishap; besides losing one of our invalids who died within sight of the city, we grounded upon a sand bank, and lost a whole day in vain efforts to get afloat again. It happened very fortunately that Dr. Ross, physician to the Residency, came out to meet us with an interpreter. He easily procured a boat to put us on shore, and we reached the town on foot.

I took up my quarters with my travelling companions at the house of Colonel Taylor, whose hospitality I had previously experienced, and with whom I was on much better terms, since the suspicions, which I had once entertained as to the real object of the expedition, had been completely dispelled by Colonel Chesney's frank explanations. It was sufficient for me, whatever might be the ulterior designs, to prevent our being taken by surprise, and to be able to give timely notice to my government. Colonel Chesney looked upon the expedition as more especially a means of civilization, and as opening new channels for the trade of all nations. He observed, that if England defrayed the expence, it was because she had a greater interest at stake than any other power, and not because she claimed any exclusive advantage. The world at large, according to him, was to profit by the scientific portion of his expedition, and he had requested the President of the Board of Control to communicate to the French government the results of his observa-

tions. He did not approve of the measures which the Resident had thought proper to adopt, and would rather that no other object had been assigned to his mission than that which he ascribed to it. His explanations were, I am persuaded, sincere; and as he gave his countrymen who govern Asia credit for philosophical sentiments which exist only in Europe, it is more than probable that he deceived himself in regard to the inevitable consequences that would have ensued from success in the outset. That success, if followed up, which would have led to the exercise of dominion over the country.

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the whole population of Bagdad was on the shore to behold the entrance of the steamer as soon as she was able to move up. On the following day, permission was granted to the inhabitants to visit her; and the regular soldiers, more conversant with the progress of civilization than the rest, were the first to venture on board. Some of them had beheld similar wonders at Constantinople, and undertook to explain to the others what they probably could not comprehend themselves, namely, the machinery by which the whole was set in motion. Nobody would believe that the hull was of iron; they imagined that the wood-work was coated with sheets of that metal, just as vessels are sheathed with copper. The soldiers who went on board in troops, were followed by numbers of the inhabitants, and these by the *mollahs* themselves; and at length curiosity inspired several women with sufficient courage to venture on board. As for Asker Pacha, the governor *ad interim*, he thought it beneath his dignity to follow the general example;

but condescended to place himself at a window commanding a view of the river, whence he beheld the steamer make various evolutions in honour of himself. He was however much displeased when a salute was fired, and took care not to return this piece of politeness.

If I was struck, on my second visit to Bassora, with the decline of the prosperity which I had observed there some years before, the decay of Bagdad was still more remarkable. On going to pay my respects to Asker Pacha, I passed through several bazaars which used formerly to be crowded; I scarcely met a creature, and nearly all the shops were closed. Profound silence now reigned in those spots, which in former days exhibited the same busy appearance as Cairo; and on every side ruined or deserted houses met the eye. War, followed by the plague, had visited the city of the Caliphs, which under the existing system of administration had but little chance of recovering its former prosperity. It was quiet, however, as the Pacha and his court had gone to the wars. Asker Pacha governed as his substitute; his administration was tolerably firm, and as he was not addicted to intemperance like Ali Pacha, and less absorbed by profound astrological calculations, he was able to bestow a small portion of his time upon public business. He had been sent from Constantinople to assist the titular Pacha, Ali Raza Pacha, or rather, to be at hand to fill his place if it should be determined to get rid of him. Asker was in person tall and thin, and had been brought up in the seraglio at Constantinople, as one of the Sultan's slaves. I am not aware of the precise nature

of his functions there, but I noticed that the habit of remaining long in a very inconvenient posture had given his legs a most extraordinary form, so that he was not able to stand up for any length of time.

I found him seated alone, in a corner of one of those windows, known at Constantinople by the Persian name of *Shanichin* (the King's seat.) We had a long conversation respecting the wretched condition of Bassora, and the resources which the country would produce were it better governed. He entirely concurred in my observations; but I am quite certain that he looked upon me as a fool for taking any interest in the matter. His opinion however was not entitled to much weight, for his superior, the Pacha, had just caught him in an act of flagrant perfidy, and he was more concerned about his own personal safety than about the welfare of the whole human race. No sooner had Ali Pacha left Bagdad, than Asker Pacha, according to the usual practice, drew up a long memorial criminating his chief, which he caused the principal inhabitants to sign, and then despatched for Constantinople. It complained of the Vizier's mal-administration, and the extortions of his son-in-law Hamdi Bey, who certainly was one of the greatest rascals in that country where such characters abound. Abdul Kader Agha, who was at the head of the customs, had signed the document along with the others; but secretly communicated every thing to Ali Pacha, who caused the messenger to be waylaid, and thus obtained possession of Asker Pacha's petition.

Unluckily, it is not quite so easy to make one's escape from Bagdad as from Bassora; and

any Pacha venturing upon flight, without a numerous escort, would be soon attacked by the Arabs; the accuser therefore had no choice, but to remain and meditate upon the awkwardness of his position. Either Ali Pacha did not dare, or was unwilling to take the life of his enemy, because he belonged to the Sultan; but, on his return to Bagdad, he obliged him to leave the city, and sent him back to Constantinople. I believe that he is at present Governor of Tripoli. He knew just as much about Europeans as any Turk employed in the affairs of the capital may do; he mentioned by name several of the Dragomans of Constantinople, and appeared to have been on intimate terms with M. Lapierre, the principal interpreter to the French Embassy. He was by no means ignorant of the rights and privileges of Europeans; but being a scrupulous Mussulman, he would not suffer these privileges to be overstepped; and I believe that one of his complaints against the Pacha was, that the latter did not resist the encroachments of Colonel Taylor, or prevent his intermeddling in the private affairs of the Pachalic.

Although Bagdad when I passed through it in 1824 was no longer the city described in "the Arabian Nights," yet it possessed the oriental character in a higher degree than any other. Next to Mecca, it may be considered as the principal place of assembly for pious Mahometans. The tomb of Ali, which is situated at a little distance from it, attracts all his followers; as the ancient residence of the Caliphs it is held in especial veneration by the Sunnees; and it is esteemed the most holy city after Mecca and Medina. Its Pacha, after

governing there for ten years, might assume the title of Caliph, and his rank placed him next to the Pacha of Mecca, and before those of Egypt and Damascus. His origin, (and a slave had often been raised to the post), was no drawback from these honours. Davoud Pacha, a Georgian, whose family I had seen at Tiflis, was Governor at that period, 1824.

I paid him a visit, when he took care to make a grand display of Asiatic pomp; but I was too well acquainted with that species of splendour in all its details, not to be aware how empty and unsubstantial it really is. I knew too well that the rich carpets covered worn-out mats swarming with vermin; that the gorgeous dresses were made of bad cloth; that the gold which appeared to glitter on all sides was nothing but brass; and that the mirrors which ornamented the kiosk where the Pacha sat in state, were not all together equal in value to the looking-glass of an ordinary hair-dresser. But on the other hand, his power and magnificence could not be questioned when I beheld a hundred slaves clothed in white, drawn up in the court under the Pacha's window, with their eyes fixed upon him ready to obey his orders. These slaves were his own; all authority was exercised in his name; I beheld soldiers depending on him alone, a numerous retinue, and an army at his command. I had traversed great cities governed by his lieutenants; and I recognised the representatives of powerful Sheikhs among those who surrounded him, and sought his protection. Every building of any value was his property; he possessed large quantities of merchandise, and owned sea-going vessels as

well as river craft; and he coined money. It was said that one hundred thousand strangers annually passed through his capital on their way to the tomb of Ali, and this concourse transformed a spot in the Desert into a great commercial emporium.

His pomp partook of that true oriental splendour which borrows nothing from Europe, and consisted principally in pageants termed *benishes*, which if they could be graced by the presence of the fair sex, would be real tournaments. I was present at one during my stay. The Sultan had dispatched a commissioner to Bagdad; the Pacha had him waylaid, and robbed of his *firmans* before he entered the city; having thus deprived the envoy of the power of injuring him, he paid him every mark of respect and attention. The *benish* which I witnessed was given in his honour. Immense tents were erected in the Desert, about a mile distant from the city, whence the Pacha and his court proceeded on horseback. The Pacha rode by himself, preceded by kettle-drummers, and mounted on a magnificent white horse; he was followed by a hundred of his body-guard on foot, armed with muskets; then came his slaves on horseback clothed in white, wearing large green hats, encircled by a white turban, embroidered, after the fashion of Bagdad, with a palm branch in gold. This train, both men and horses, were the property of the Pacha. The Sultan's envoy came next, followed by the different officers of the Pacha and their servants. The brother and son of Davoud Pacha, repaired to the *benish* by different routes, each followed by their dependents; and although their splendour fell short of the Pacha's, they also were preceded by a band of musicians, and affected

the same kind of pomp. On reaching the ground, where the regular troops were already assembled, the Pacha and his principal officers entered their tents, and the imperial commissioner was conducted to that of Davoud Pacha.

The tilting then commenced: the horsemen, formed into two bodies, alternately charging the artillery and troops of the line, who opened a fire upon them. Luckily the latter were at such a distance that their European uniforms did not disturb the harmonious effect of this Asiatic scene. After this the horsemen charged one another, brandishing their lances, as if they were about to strike; then shaking their weapons until they quivered like reeds, and uttering loud shouts, they hurled them to an immense distance, and suddenly retreated. Servants were employed in picking up these missiles in the midst of the *mêlée*, yet no accidents occurred. At one moment, a Koord might be seen to rein up his horse when at full speed, throwing the animal upon his haunches, then wheeling round without pausing an instant, he would gallop off in the opposite direction; at another, a Georgian exhibited the feat of standing upright, sword in hand, upon his narrow saddle, in full career.

A very amusing game, not understood by Europeans who are unaccustomed to it, is played by two or three persons, following each other on horseback. The horses need not be put into full gallop; he who starts first anticipates, as it were, the movements of his adversaries, and must turn round at the proper moment, and in such a position, as to allow of his warding off the blows which are aimed at him. If very expert, he will

often defend himself successfully against his adversaries; on this occasion some of the most dexterous performers gave us a specimen of this diversion. When it is borne in mind that several hundred persons were engaged in these exercises; that from the *burnous* of the Arab to the richly embroidered dress of the Arnaut, all the costumes of Asia are to be seen there; that polished weapons glittered on all sides; that the horses were of the finest breeds of Arabia, and those who rode them the best horsemen in the world; that the *spectacle* was exhibited in a boundless Desert, and illumined by a sun, the power of which we have no notion of, the reader will feel why I cannot do justice to its splendour. I have seen the *doma-bactchi* races at Constantinople, the *naurouz* of the Persians, the *deséré* of India, and the military displays of the *benish* of Egypt; but none of these equalled the Pacha of Bagdad. There every thing was in harmony—the scene—the actors—the performances; and nothing appeared there either ridiculous or repulsive. Davoud Pacha could indulge in this recreation whenever he pleased; the men and horses, being his own property, were always at his orders. When he went out hunting, he was escorted by two thousand horsemen; these, in war, formed the best portion of his troops. Such is the kind of pomp which pleases the Turks, and which prompts them to reply to any one who boasts of the arts of Europe, or rallies them upon their poverty—*Male Indostan, akel Franguistan, saltanat el-ali-Osman.* "Indostan has riches, and Europe science, but the sons of Osman have magnificence."

At the period to which I refer, Bagdad did not most certainly enjoy the blessings of a paternal government, and the administration was in no wise more enlightened than at present; the Pacha was probably not a whit better than his successor, and it may be inferred from the following incident that his views were not very extended, nor his manner of ruling men the most refined. He was a native of Georgia and of a poor family. On his elevation to power, his two brothers joined him in the hope of sharing his prosperity: the elder refused to turn a Mahometan, and was sent back to his own country with some presents; the younger being a great fool and a drunkard, they made a Turk of him. His brother the Pacha furnished a house for him, gave him attendants, and advanced him some money. When this was spent, Hussein Pacha (for such was his title since the rank of *mir-i-miran* had been purchased for him) applied for a fresh supply.

"What!" exclaimed his brother, "do you want money, and don't know how to procure it! Are you not the brother of Davoud Pacha; and who will dare to refuse it you?"

The drunkard withdrew, ashamed of his ignorance; and by way of showing that his brother's hint had not been lost upon him, one day, when in his cups, he ordered a Jew to be seized, had him suspended by the heels, and bastinadoed nearly to death. Meanwhile his excellency sipped his wine, and laughed heartily at this. The victim of his cruelty was not released till he had given up all that he possessed. This process appeared so simple to Hussein Pacha, and he had recourse to it so

frequently, that his brother, indulgent as he was, found it necessary to remove him to a distance, and appointed him Governor of Bassora. There he heard of the sumptuous entertainments of the Resident, and was desirous to partake of them: he accordingly went one evening, uninvited, to one of Colonel Taylor's parties. The latter, familiar from his childhood with Asiatic manners, and having a correct idea of Mussulman dignitaries, requested his excellency without ceremony to take himself off, and expressed his wish never to have any other than official intercourse with him. This same Governor took it into his head, some time afterwards, that he would seize all property of private persons, thinking that he had a right to it; but being unsuccessful in this attempt, he fell upon that of the public, or rather of his brother. As it appeared very absurd to him that a vessel should be coppered, he ordered all the vessels then in port to be stripped of the sheathing, and sold it. At length a revolt was apprehended, and he was recalled.

The administration of Davoud Pacha, as the reader will perceive, bore a close resemblance to that of Mehemet Ali, with this difference, that Davoud was a man of letters, whereas Mehemet Ali is quite illiterate. If one had a son-in-law the other had a brother ready to commit extortions. Both of them had to govern Arabs, but the difficulties of Davoud Pacha were greater, because his subjects could withdraw from his territories by flight in all directions, whereas it was impossible to escape from Egypt. If Mehemet Ali had destroyed the Mamelukes at Cairo, Davoud had destroyed

his countrymen, the Georgians, at Bagdad. Davoud had employed regular troops before Mehemet Ali; but the latter acquired information by his intercourse with Europe, and profited by the advice of able men who were attracted to the country. Davoud Pacha had not these advantages, and moreover nobody was engaged or paid to praise him. No doubt, time would have brought about at Bagdad what we have witnessed in Egypt. Davoud Pacha would have become the sole merchant of his empire, and no one would have been able to carry on trade without his permission; ignorance and flattery would have induced him to imagine himself a great man; he would have increased the number of his troops, attacked his neighbours, and set up for a potentate. But he did not go so far; and when I saw him, his independence of the Porte was sufficient to be beneficial to a population under a Turkish governor. If in Turkey a Pacha may be removed at pleasure, and is obliged to execute all the orders which are transmitted to him, the province he presides over must of necessity be oppressed. Davoud Pacha, though a despot, was not strong enough to appropriate every thing within his government to himself, like Mehemet Ali; on the other hand, he was not in such a state of subjection to the Porte as rendered it necessary to transmit the whole of the revenue to Constantinople. The country was thus in the enjoyment of that state of precarious prosperity which is the only one that Mahometan provinces can ever hope to attain.

Bagdad is one of the great cities of the Turkish

Empire; it is surrounded with brick walls and moats, and is defended by numerous pieces of cannon, and might stand a siege against an Asiatic army. Seated on the left bank of the Tigris, it is united by a bridge of boats with the right bank, on which stands a suburb called Old Bagdad. I observed nothing there which indicated great antiquity. At certain periods the bridge opens to allow boats to pass; however at no time is it advisable to cross it without necessity; not only is it extremely narrow, but the crowd upon it is sometimes so great, that foot-passengers are thrust into the river by the horses, camels and asses that choke the passage. It is constructed, moreover, of the trunks of palm-trees, loosely laid, side by side, in a very careless manner, and is kept in wretched repair. Of the ancient wonders of the city I have not seen anything worthy of attention. The present Custom-House is said to have been the ancient palace of the Caliphs; the wall in which the gateway stands appears, indeed, to be of some antiquity, and remains of inscriptions can be discerned upon it. During my first visit I noticed a caravanserai, the singular construction of which attracted my attention; it is situated in the principal bazaar. From the inner court may be seen on the first story a gallery, which runs all round it, and is ornamented with small columns surmounted by very elegant ogives, quite in the Moorish style. At the angle formed by two bazaars, which join another of much greater extent, stands a house, which appears to be in a much better style than the modern edifices. The arsenal,

the citadel, the mint and the other buildings mentioned in geographical works are not worth notice. The dome, partly gilt, of a modern mosque, situated in one of the public places near the Constantinople gate, is of bold execution, but inferior to many similar structures in Persia. It is built of bricks, fitted into each other with wonderful art and freedom.

The houses, thanks to the influx of Persians who have introduced some of their customs, are for the most part built after the Persian fashion. They contain the *khaneh divan*, the outer apartment where strangers are received; and the *anderoon*, or inner room. Several of the houses bespeak the ancient prosperity of the city; although in bad condition, they are extensive, and contain spacious apartments with marble floors. As at Bassora, the most important room is the *sardab* (fresh water), where the inmates seek shelter from the mid-day heat; it is not always dark like that which served me for a retreat; and in some there are fountains which impart an agreeable coolness to the air. The terraces on the house-tops also are kept in good repair, and it is there that the inhabitants sleep. These terraces at Bagdad are surrounded with walls sufficiently high to screen the inmates from the curiosity of their neighbours. Bagdad, therefore, does not present the same ludicrous scene as the Persian towns, where at daybreak the women may be seen hastily rolling up their mattresses, anxious to escape from the gaze of profane observers.

Were I attempting for the first time to esti-

mate the population of a Turkish town I should say, that in 1824 the population of Bagdad amounted to about one hundred thousand. This, indeed, was the estimate I made at my first visit; my calculation was based on the number of houses which the city was said to contain, without including strangers. After having attentively examined my former computations, I must now admit that I am not aware of any means by which it is possible to arrive at a satisfactory approximation to truth, in ascertaining the amount of the population in Mahometan towns. I found that the exact number of houses is as imperfectly known to the authorities as to the inhabitants. There is no exact census of anything, and the numbers are made to vary according to circumstances. Ask a Pacha how many houses his capital contains, he will swell the amount most immoderately, if he be desirous of giving himself importance; but if a levy of money is the object, he will reduce it to nothing. Any person may build a house without leave, and no body is forced to repair one which is falling to ruin. Although some properties are registered at the *mékémé*, in consequence of their having been the subject of litigation, a good many are sold or transferred by mere *sénets* or slips of paper, signed in the presence of witnesses. Nor does the consumption of food supply us with materials for estimating the number of inhabitants; for it is utterly impossible to obtain a correct account of the provisions which are smuggled into the city; and no dependence can be placed on the public registers.

The plan that I often adopted at Bassora, and which I found to answer better than any other as a means of computation, was the following: I strolled through the bazaars before noon on Friday, on which day the Mahometans attend their mosques with the greatest punctuality, and I was then pretty certain that nearly all the male population was abroad. I counted the number of persons that I met, and multiplied it by ten. This gave a result at various times of thirty thousand souls, and my other investigations have led me to believe that my calculation was not far from the mark. I think, were the population of Bagdad reckoned in this manner, that it would not now-a-days be found to exceed that of Bassora. Although the same activity and stir which formerly prevailed at Bagdad exist no longer; and although the plague and the cholera carried off, it is said, one third of the population in 1831; still there is more bustle in that city than at Bassora. But it must be observed that Bassora is three miles long, whereas the diameter of Bagdad does not exceed half a mile.

Round the town there are plantations of date trees, which are called gardens by the inhabitants; there are some also filled with orange and lemon trees; the inhabitants prefer cultivating the latter because in Babylonia, as in Egypt, they dislike the acidity of the orange. They grow no olives, although I think they would thrive there very well; the pomegranates are very fine, the grapes of exquisite flavour, but other fruits are of indifferent quality. When I arrived at Bagdad from Persia in 1824, the country was nowhere well cul-

tivated except near Bacouba, and not a dwelling nor a trace of cultivation was to be seen between that small town and the capital. The road then lay over a soil composed of freestone which sloped insensibly down to the river's edge. It is in this Desert the simoon is most to be dreaded. This wind which blows from the south-west during the months of June, July, and August, is considered most dangerous in the first-mentioned month. Its approach is indicated by the atmosphere losing somewhat of its transparency, upon observing which, travellers throw themselves upon the ground with their feet towards the wind; the horses are placed with their heads turned from it, and the camels are made to kneel down. If these precautions are neglected, both man and beast perish instantaneously; and in case of death, from this cause, the decomposition of the body follows immediately. The simoon does not act in a uniform manner, and as if its parts were identical. It appears indeed to be crossed by a pestilential current, acting in the manner of electricity, and which I suspect to have some affinity to that fluid, for it strikes with an effect similar to that of lightning.

Such is the result of my inquiries respecting this phenomenon, the existence of which I cannot doubt, from its evident influence upon the habits of the natives: they only travel by night, in fact, during the season when the simoon blows. I should add, that it never penetrates into towns or places planted with trees. In speaking of Bassora, I have already stated what peculiar effects are observable when the south wind prevails: the bristling up of the cat's back,

the irritation one feels about the head, and the dryness of the hair, are my reasons for thinking that electricity has something to do with these phenomena.

Corn and rice are cultivated in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, and the country through which I passed on my way to Iman Hussein, (a small Persian town situated about a league from Bagdad, on the right bank of the river,) appeared to me in a state of prosperity. Davoud Pacha had made cotton plantations on the banks of the Tigris, but obtained slender results; he also tried to introduce the sugar-cane, but did not succeed. The experiments were probably faulty, for if these articles are easily cultivated in Egypt, I see no reason why they should not succeed on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates.

If, notwithstanding all my endeavours during a two years' residence at Bassora, I found it impracticable to form a correct estimate of its commerce; still less could I learn any satisfactory particulars concerning that of Bagdad. It may be safe to state that silk and Shiraz tobacco are imported from Persia; cloth and silks from Aleppo; silks, gold wire, and some sorts of European manufactures from Constantinople; that dates, and the products of India, consisting of sugar, indigo, pepper, and cinnamon, are sent from Bassora; that through the same channel are received British manufactures, iron, muslins and silks from India, and coffee and slaves from the Red Sea. Bagdad sends to Aleppo Shiraz tobacco and also certain productions of India; to Persia, European and Damas-

cus silks; to Bassora, horses, and more especially money and jewels—memorials of former prosperity, —and old copper. All these articles are destined for India. I regret that I cannot give the figures of these commercial transactions. Bagdad was once celebrated for its silk manufactures, but they exist no longer; a little cotton is woven, and there are several dyers there. The art of enamelling on copper, which was formerly carried on with great success, has now declined considerably. The heads of the Persian pipes and the handles of daggers enamelled at Bagdad are frequently of beautiful workmanship.

Davoud Pacha had reserved for himself the trade in corn, salt, and dates, but this monopoly ceased when he fell into disgrace. The revenue of the present Pacha is derived from the farming of the different provinces; from the *carratch*, the customs, the contributions of various Sheikhs, and the brandy monopoly; but more especially from the trade carried on for his own account. By adding to all this the *djouroum* (extortions), which produce a pretty large sum, I estimate the annual revenue of the Pachalic at about five hundred thousand pounds. This calculation is based upon the Pacha's own accounts, which, as will be seen, have passed through my hands. The districts of the Pachalic are governed by Mutselims, the most important of whom is that of Bassora; but they all pursue the same administrative system. With regard to the Arabs, they are divided into tribes, the principal of which are the Chamars and the Chaffallés, in the neighbourhood of Bagdad. The Montefiks inhabit the peninsula of Mesopotamia, and their capital is Soug-el-

Schiouq, situated on the Euphrates. The Ben-Ilam are on the left bank of the Tigris, and their country borders to the south on that of the Chahabs. The Montefiks have also for neighbours on the south the Nejds, whose capital is Derayeh. These Arab tribes, like the Koords of the north, are represented at the Pacha's court by some relative of their Sheikh. Their connexion with the Turkish government has no fixed rules, and may be explained in a few words: the Pacha endeavours to rob them of all he can, and by all the means in his power; if he succeeds, he reduces them to the condition of the *fellahs* in Egypt. But as it happens that, at Bagdad, it is no easy matter to establish this domination, the yoke is but nominal, and their independence is almost absolute.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Dissolution of the Euphrates expedition—Protestant Missionaries —State of Persia—Murder of Ben Tajib.

After spending a week at Bagdad, we returned to Bassora. Though the current was in our favour, our passage down was not rapid because the waters had fallen still lower. There is nothing remarkable in the Desert here but a kind of temple to which the Jews go on a pilgrimage, and which they call the tomb of Ezra; it is built of stone, a very rare material in this part of Arabia, and its construction is not destitute of a certain elegance. On our arrival at Corna, we found there the Company's packet, *Hugh Lindsay*, which had brought dispatches from India, and was waiting for us. She also conveyed two travellers who brought letters of recommendation to me from Bombay, and who were anxious to make the first voyage by the new route. The Arabs of Corna had felt uneasy at seeing a steamer cast anchor before their town, and being apprehensive of an attack, had solicited succour from the Sheikh of the Montefiks. He had replied that he would oppose the

passage of the packets on the Euphrates; and it was accordingly notified to the captain of the *Hugh Lindsay* that he must depart. This intimation was not given by the competent authority, the Governor of Bassora's representative at Corna, but directly by the Arabs, who thus addressed the English commander: "What do you want here? Are you come to trade, to buy dates? We will sell them to you; we will even give them to you if that will hasten your departure."

Their next step was to forbid all intercourse with the vessel. The captain felt somewhat embarrassed, and scarcely knew what course to pursue when we arrived. Although the Arabs beheld with a jealous eye the experiments of the English, and had given unequivocal proofs of their dissatisfaction; it had, however, been remarked that their chiefs had abstained from any kind of demonstration, and we were puzzled to account for the present conduct of the Sheikh of the Montefiks, who was usually so devoted to the English. It was resolved to proceed direct to Soug-el-Schiouq, his capital, and to inquire into his motive for these acts of hostility against travellers furnished with the orders of the Sultan. Having taken this determination, the passengers from Bombay went on board the *Euphrates*. I removed into the *Hugh Lindsay* to return to Bassora, and the two steamers started at the same moment in opposite directions.

No sooner had we reached Bassora than we learned the cause of the hostility of the Arabs. The *Hugh Lindsay* had landed at that town Samuel the missionary, who had brought

with him a considerable stock of Bibles, and other religious books printed in the oriental languages. He took up his quarters at the English Residency, which he purposed to make the centre of his operations, and had directed his first attacks against the Jews. Accompanied by three of the guards belonging to the Residency, he had proceeded to the synagogue at the hour of divine service, and had forcibly insisted on addressing the auditory. The Jews left their place of worship, and waited upon the Governor *ad interim*, to lay their complaints before him. On being requested to abstain from further interference with the Jews, Mr. Samuel repaired to the bazaar, and there he distributed his books, as he had done at Bagdad and Bushire. The effect was similar; the entire population went to the Governor: every person wearing the European dress was pelted with stones, and the Christians were insulted both by Mahometans and Jews. The temporary Governor, who was anxious to get himself confirmed in his post, and who hoped for the support of the British Resident at Bagdad, in the pursuit of this object, though he would fain have kept aloof, was obliged to yield to clamours so unanimous.

Seeing steam-boats arrive from India and Europe with missionaries on board, the inhabitants became really apprehensive that there was a design to seize their country and to convert them by force. So thoroughly were they impressed with this notion, that, on our return from Bagdad, we were asked if we had overthrown the Pacha. In short, the solicitude which the Arabs manifested on account of their

religion was much stronger than that which they entertained for their country; and an inimical feeling towards Europeans had become general. In the reports of his apostolic labours, Mr. Samuel may take credit for having, through his ignorance and imprudence, brought into imminent peril both the European inhabitants of the countries which he visited, and the peaceable native population. Even the government of Bombay cannot be altogether acquitted of connivance in this affair. According to its regulations, it had a right to grant or to refuse a passage to Mr. Samuel by one of its steamers: not only was it apprised of what had previously occurred at Bagdad and Bushire: but the newspapers even had made the conduct of the missionary a subject of controversy. To allow him after this to return; to give him a passage on board a government vessel; was either an act of provocation or imprudence, inexcusable on the part of any government.

Not daring to resort to direct violence against Mr. Samuel, the Governor of Bassora ordered the common crier to proclaim in the bazaar that all intercourse with him was forbidden, and that nothing was to be sold to him. In consequence of this he was obliged to leave the place. The books which he had distributed were at first ordered to be torn up and publicly burnt; but this order was revoked when the Bible was found to be one of them. That a book which Mahometans as well as Christians consider sacred might not be trodden under foot, it was resolved that the volumes should all be thrown into the river, and this order was accordingly executed.

Meanwhile Colonel Chesney had waited on the

Sheikh of the Montefiks for the purpose of remonstrance. Though the Sheikh received him very coldly, he did not object to the proposed voyage, and the steamer proceeded up the river to Lemloun, where the shallowness of the stream compelled her to stop. A native bark was in consequence hired, into which the passengers and despatches from India were transferred; and Seyd-Ali Agha was put in charge of this vessel, and directed to make the best of his way to Bagdad. The *Euphrates* returned to Bassora, and after putting Colonel Chesney, who was going to India, on board the *Hugh Lindsay*, she was sent to explore the mouths of the Euphrates and the Caron. The expedition had received orders to dissolve and place itself in the hands of the East India Company; and Captain Estcourt was appointed to take back the English crew to Europe, as soon as he should be furnished with the necessary means from Bombay.

When I learnt in what manner the passengers and the India mail had been sent forward to Bagdad, I foresaw at once that some disaster would befall them. A Turk, about to travel by land or by water from Bassora to Bagdad, is obliged, although a Mahometan, to adopt the Arab dress, and never ventures alone. To what risks, then, were not these four or five persons in European garb exposing themselves, more especially as none of them, not even Seyd Ali Agha, could speak the language? They were stopped by the Sheikh of Lemloun within half an hour after the departure of the *Euphrates;* robbed of every thing they had,

and cast into prison. We at Bassora were beginning to feel astonished at not hearing of them, when a *luti* or Persian mountebank, who went about with an exhibition of monkeys, came to see me and informed me of what had happened.

As this *luti* and his companions were the only strangers at Lemloun when the event occurred, they instantly fled from there, lest the Sheikh should detain them to prevent their divulging the affair; though pursued, they reached Soug-el-Schiouq, whence they found their way to Bassora. I hastened to solicit the assistance of Ben Tajib, and begged him to dispatch a messenger to Bagdad to acquaint the Pacha and English Resident with what had happened. Being an enemy of the Sheikh of Lemloun, he readily acceded to my request, and urgently besought me to denounce his foe and excite the wrath of the Vizier against him. At that time I had in my service as Janissary, a Turk named Ibrahim Agha, who had been in the service of Davoud Pacha. He was an uncommonly handsome man, and his experience at eastern courts had rendered him an adept in the art of fraud and dissimulation. For private reasons of his own he had himself killed six persons at Kercourt, and had fled to Bassora to escape the proceedings which would undoubtedly have been instituted against him after his master's downfall. Possessing most extraordinary skill in negotiating with the Arabs, he undertook to effect the release of the prisoners, as soon as he had made arrangements with the Miracor of the

Pacha, who was then on an expedition in the neighbourhood of Lemloun. I do not really know whether he fulfilled the whole of his mission, or confined it merely to soliciting, as I am aware he did, a present from the Miracor; but at all events he returned in a few days, saying that by order of a Moubachir or messenger from the Pacha, the prisoners had set out for Bagdad.

Ibrahim Agha declared that Seyd Ali Agha was the cause of what had occurred. The English from India, accustomed to pay little respect to Mahometans even when they speak European languages, had not shewn him much consideration. He felt sore at this treatment, complained of it to the Arabs, and explained to them that, as a Mahometan, and moreover a Seyd, he was superior in station to unbelievers. The imprisonment of the whole party was the result of his lamentations. A similar circumstance happened to the *Euphrates*. Some of its members having attempted to proceed by land whilst the steamer was going up the Caron, were seized, and not allowed to continue their journey.

If the Euphrates' expedition was undertaken by the British Cabinet through distrust of Russia, it must in fairness be admitted that the Duke of Wellington's administration did not manifest its sentiments in an offensive manner. The ministry which succeeded it was less scrupulous, and even had the indiscretion to appoint as Ambassador at Teheran, Dr. Mac Neil, previously physician to the British legation in Persia. The doctor, no doubt, was in all respects a most estimable man, and owed his elevation to superior talents. Suppose, however

that the physician of our Ambassador in London were a man of preeminent talent, can any one believe that the English Cabinet would feel gratified at his being all at once appointed Ambassador to their sovereign, or that the *corps diplomatique* would admit him with pleasure into their circle? In Persia the medical profession enjoys less consideration than in Europe, and the appointment in question was regarded by the King as an affront, and also gave umbrage to Count Simonich, the Russian Ambassador.

As I knew Mr. Mac Neil's character and sentiments, and the delicate position in which he would find himself, it was not difficult to predict the result. I stated therefore in my dispatches, so far back as the beginning of 1837, that English influence was destroyed in Persia, and that I had no doubt that the British Minister would do all in his power to accelerate a rupture between that country and his own. In the following year, what I had foretold came to pass. The first symptoms of misunderstanding appeared on occasion of the Persian expedition against Herat. The English officers in the Shah's service were dismissed, and the highest in rank among them, a captain, though he was called colonel, passed through Bassora shortly afterwards.

I have often been struck by the tolerance with which the continental powers recognize without remonstrance whatever rank the Sovereign of England is pleased to bestow upon officers, for the avowed purpose of giving them a fictitious importance. We see every day notifications of appointments to the following effect: "Captain So-

and-so of such a regiment, being about to proceed to such a country, will assume the local rank of Colonel." This colonel, on his return, resumes his rank of captain. It is plain that captains in the armies of continental powers are unfairly forced by this manœuvre to give precedence to English officers of inferior standing. It is astonishing that governments, which ought punctiliously to protect the dignity of their officers, should suffer abuses of this sort to pass without remonstrance. When I went to India, I was not a little surprised at meeting with officers who had retrograded several steps in rank since I had previously known them. Colonel Passmore, one of those to whom I allude, and who shortly afterwards died deplorably at Madras, accused Russia of intrigues, and like his fellow-countrymen in general, thought that England alone had a right to resort to such means.

Those only who are practically acquainted with Englishmen can form any conception of the candour and simplicity with which they openly avow, and even affect to treat as strictly lawful, acts which are at utter variance with the laws of nations, when these acts promote their policy. For instance, they had established the King of Persia upon his throne, had recognized him, and kept an Ambassador at his court; yet at Bagdad, on the very threshold of Persia, they had under their protection and in their pay a pretender to the crown of that sovereign. "Ah!" Colonel Passmore would exclaim, "let the Shah but throw himself into the arms of Russia, and we will supply his cousin with funds to dethrone him, and give him officers to assist him."

I am far from sharing the popular opinion in France as to the bad faith of Englishmen; I must acknowledge even that I have ever found them disposed to adopt views founded on justice; but these considerations do not suggest themselves spontaneously, and never enter into their minds when they run counter to their interests. I shall adduce abundant proofs that England has been incessantly intriguing in Asia, that her proceedings have been characterized by avowed hostility to Russia, throwing into shade the ambitious schemes attributed to that power. Talking of intrigues, I may as well mention one which concerns myself. I received one day from the Marquis d'Eyragues, our *chargé d'affaires* at Constantinople, a letter in which he informed me that my dispatches to him had come to hand, but bore the seal of the English Resident with the following superscription: "Opened by the Arabs." Monsieur d'Eyragues observed that the Arabs had been in this case unusually polite, for they had neither soiled the letters nor opened the packet more than was absolutely necessary to read the dispatches. This packet had been dispatched to the care of the Resident, to whom I sent a few newspapers; it should have been entrusted to the English courier; for if the Turks have no post-office establishment in that country, the English at least have. The courier, whose report was authenticated by officers then at Bassora, had reached Bagdad without molestation. I ought to add that the letters in question were some of the most important that I forwarded to my government, and principally related to the proceedings of the English agents in

Arabia. M. d'Eyragues did not inform me whether he had made representations on the subject to the British Ambassador. For my part, it was very clear what course I ought to adopt. I ceased to have any intercourse with the Residency and made the occurrence public. Had an Englishman preferred a similar complaint, great would have been the indignation of his fellow-countrymen; but I suppose that, as the aggrieved party was a Frenchman and the agent of a foreign power, the act seemed quite natural. In India the Residents consider that they have a right, indeed that it is their duty, to open the public letters which pass through their hands.

In the mean time Colonel Chesney had arrived at Bombay, and had succeeded in obtaining the approval of his plan for making Mohamera the centre of communication by the Euphrates. A steamer was to convey the India mails to that place, where they were to be transferred to steamers adapted to river navigation. As usual, the government of India had not given itself any concern about the opinion of the local authorities, but had forthwith put the plan into execution. Orders had consequently been sent to the Resident at Bushire, who was charged with the chief superintendence. The question whether the Sheikh of Mohamera was subordinate to the Pacha of Bagdad, and whether Mohamera belonged to Persia or to Turkey, did not occasion the Resident to pause for a moment. He wrote at once to the Sheikh of Mohamera, to give notice of the resolution of England, and request

his co-operation. The Sheikh, who owned vessels engaged in the trade with Bombay, and who moreover was in dread of being superseded by the Pacha, knew better than to refuse, and made the necessary preparations.

It appeared to me that this was a neat way of settling two very important questions, and of acquiring by a dexterous manœuvre, the domination of the river. If the Sheikh was in open revolt against the Pacha, what right had the English, who were navigating the river under the protection of the Pacha, to treat with his rebellious subject? If Mohamera was a dependency of Bagdad, how came it that a Resident accredited in Persia was authorised to open negociations with the Sheikh, when there was another accredited Resident in that town? Before denouncing these acts of the English, either at Constantinople or at Bagdad, I wished first to ascertain that they were not the results of ignorance, and committed without any intention of violating received forms. In consequence, I applied for information to the Resident at Bushire; but the answers which I received from him were not of a satisfactory nature. It was clear to me that the English purposed to act in Turkish Arabia as they had done in the Persian Gulf, namely to recognize the Sheikhs as independent authorities, and to control them by opposing them against one another.

Colonel Chesney, who returned from Bombay and went straight on from Bassora to Damascus, did not relish my remarks; nay, he was surprised at

them. I was obliged to tell him that it was my duty to interfere in every thing which tended to change the state of the country, and to report to the proper quarter. I was, moreover, well aware that it would have suited him better to have been allowed to arrange his plans in secret, and that it would have been a glorious triumph for England to find herself one day, to the great astonishment of Europe, mistress of one of the noblest rivers in Asia.

Whilst the English were directing their attention to the establishment at Mohamera, Bassora re-assumed its wonted aspect; the English officers did not visit it so often, much to the regret of the Governor *ad interim*, who was very anxious to make himself agreeable to them in order to secure the support of the Resident at Bagdad. To further his views he had, with delicate attention, transmitted to the head of the Customs at Bagdad as accurate an account as possible of what Mehemet Tchelebi had embezzled. He hoped thus to excite enmity between the two associates; however, they did not fall out, but concerted how to ruin Tajib Oglou. For this purpose, they procured from the Pacha a *firman*, commanding the assassination of that Sheikh. It was drawn up secretly, and only four persons were privy to it: the chief of the Customs, Mehemet Tchelebi, the Pacha, and a Jew, from whom they were under the necessity of borrowing a sum of money, and to whom they had to explain how he was to be reimbursed. These arrangements having been made, the Pacha affected to be dissatisfied with Mehemet Tchelebi,

who was to depart secretly, and his substitute to be informed that his appointment would soon be signed. Ben Tajib was then residing at Bassora, and was more completely master of the country than he had heretofore been. He had paid a visit on board of the *Hugh Lindsay*, a few days after he had prevented the Arabs from executing a plot which they had formed for burning that vessel; and having met with a very indifferent reception, felt extremely irritated. He invariably evinced hostility to the English, and gave evident tokens of his hatred of them. The English Resident at Bushire, with whom I had continued to be on a friendly footing, wrote to me on the subject, and begged me to interpose my good offices with Ben Tajib, supposing me to have much more influence with him than I really had or wished to possess.

It is true that Ben Tajib never refused me anything I asked of him; but I did not exactly see in what way he thought I could be useful to him in return. He frequently inquired what news I had received from Bagdad; and his anxiety increased when he heard that a Governor was shortly to be appointed. That his arrival might be unexpected, Mehemet Tchelebi had, on quitting Bagdad, caused the couriers for Bassora to be detained. One of them, however, reached Zobeir, and Ben Tajib, apprised of his arrival, collected his partisans. He was ready to defend himself if the Governor had been accompanied with such a number of troops as to excite his suspicions. Mehemet Tchelebi took care not to commit that blunder; and when

he arrived, affected to dread the Sheikh, and to be afraid of at once entering the town. He accordingly remained two days at the Custom-house gates, and did not venture into it until the third day. It was Friday, and that very day I met Ben Tajib, who, followed by a numerous retinue, was going to the mosque to perform his mid-day devotions. He jeered at the Mutselim, and the handful of soldiers he had brought with him, and did not even condescend to go forward to meet him.

On my return home, I found there a young Jew whom I protected, and who used to supply me with information. He had gone to the house of one of his relations, and looking over his papers, had seen a letter which announced that Ben Tajib was condemned to death, or rather was ordered to be assassinated. I had time to put him on his guard, but I did not: it was in my power to save him, but my duty forbade me. I was obliged to forget that this man had never rendered me other than kind services, and to leave him to his wretched fate. Till the deed was consummated, I was a prey to anxiety more intense than words can express; now on the point of apprizing him of his danger, and the next moment restrained by the responsibility which I should have incurred. In these unhappy countries the struggles of political ambition terminate in torrents of blood. Had Ben Tajib been warned, he would not have fled: he would have slaughtered the Governor and his suite, and made himself master of the town, which his troops would have pillaged: the Pacha would then have been forced to reconquer this por-

tion of his territories. Such would have been, in a Mahometan country, the consequences of an act dictated by common humanity.

Mehemet Tchelebi had brought with him an Arab chief called Ben Mutchari, who was related to the Zeir family, the rivals of Tajib. They entered the town with great pomp, and proceeded to the chamber of the divan, where we all assembled; even my servants were admitted. Hither too came Ben Tajib, to see the Governor, whom he embraced as well as Ben Mutchari; but he notified to the latter that he must quit Bassora in twenty-four hours. They then seated themselves, conversation ensued, and at last the Cadi was called in to read aloud the firmans for the new appointments. That of Governor was first read, after which the Cadi's, before attending to that of the Sheikh of Zobeir. Ben Tajib seemed to feel this breach of etiquette; but the Mutselim, to divert his attention, remarked that it was useless, in the season of the Ramazan, to keep fatigued Mahometans under arms, and complained that he could not hear the contents of the firmans.

The Arabs who had accompanied Ben Tajib were turned out of the court of the palace; the soldiers of the Governor himself were dismissed, with the exception of those who were employed, according to custom, in firing the cannon during the reading of the firmans. At length the reading was resumed, and Ben Tajib perceiving that it still related to the Cadi, rose with the intention of withdrawing. Whilst he stopped at the door of the divan to put on his slippers, an Aïta shot him with a pistol in the loins, and the young lad who

had charge of his pipe, having drawn his sword, was also dispatched. On the report of the pistol, the gates of the palace were closed, so that the Arabs could not enter; they, however, threatened an assault, and did not disperse until the stripped and lifeless body of their chief had been thrown out of one of the windows. A negro slave who was devotedly attached to the ill-fated Sheikh, and had twice saved his life, ran to his master's residence, secured his papers, mounted his horse, and rode to Zobeir, where he assisted the Sheikh's family in making their escape and carrying off their treasure. The Governor's followers arrived too late, and found only a few scraps of registers, which they nevertheless converted into means of annoyance and extortion against many persons. Ben Mutchari was appointed Sheikh of Zobeir, and most of the chiefs acknowledged his authority; he demolished in his turn, the house of Tajib, and, on the evening of this tragedy, all the partisans of the Zeirs met at the ruins of the house to celebrate their victory: the night was spent in dancing and festivity.

Such are the details of a horrible murder, committed in cold blood by a young man of thirty, of gentle manners, gay and good-natured; such are the results of the religion and education of Mahometans; such is the way in which they pervert the best dispositions. Need we, after this, feel astonished at the cool-blooded barbarity with which an old chief of desperadoes, like Mehemet Ali, caused the Mamelukes to be massacred; at the inhumanity with which Davoud Pacha put to death the Georgians at Bagdad; or at the horrible

butchery of the Janizaries and the Greeks, throughout the Ottoman empire? Some writers have sought to discover in these enormities proofs of greatness of character. I have seen it stated in print that the murder of the Duke d'Enghien was as odious a deed, on the part of Napoleon, as the massacre of the Mamelukes. But my indignation is roused when civilised men are compared with the miscreants of Asia. Supposing that Napoleon was the murderer of the Duke d'Enghien, are we therefore to conclude that there is the slightest resemblance between him and the Pacha of Egypt? But Napoleon would probably feel regret for the crime he had committed; he would seek to explain it away, and plead his motives in extenuation: his conscience, in short, would have allowed him no peace. The despots of the East, on the contrary, never feel compunction for such deeds: Mehemet Ali chuckles at the simplicity with which the Mamelukes suffered themselves to be entrapped. Mehemet Tchelebi felt as little remorse: his enemy once dispatched, Ben Mutchari and he embraced each other, and received the congratulations of the whole city.

On the following day that Governor caused the man who had aspired to his post to be poisoned, and imprisoned the Jew, who had informed against him, till he paid a ransom. This done he thought of nothing but enjoying himself, led a life of pleasure, and made excursions into the country. But, ere long, he abandoned the last mentioned amusement: he fancied that he saw Ben Tajib's redoubtable negro in a garden, and fled in great alarm to his palace. He never mentioned

Ben Tajib's name, unless it were to laugh at the clever trick he had played him. The assassin of the Sheikh, to whom alone the Governor had confided his secret preparations, became a personage of importance after the event. People hastened to congratulate him and make him presents: I was thought ill-bred because I did not pay him my compliments. The Mutselim, who had remunerated him rather shabbily, soon began to dread him, and got rid of him some time afterwards.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Expedition against Mohamera.

THE expedition undertaken by Ali Riza, Pacha of Bagdad, against Mohamera, which terminated in the plunder of that town, is, together with the more recent pillage of Kerbelah, the principal grievance of Persia against the Ottoman Porte. I am one of the small number of Europeans who witnessed the first-mentioned event, and no one probably knows all its circumstances, and the motives of the actors, better than I do.

I have already described the conduct of the English in regard to Mohamera, and mentioned how unsatisfactory I considered the excuses which they had offered me. My efforts to avert the issue which I foresaw, and the complications likely to arise out of it had, I frankly admit, little chance of success. Our embassy at Constantinople would scarcely have understood the point at issue, and did not know enough of the country to enable them to make a successful opposition. My government was at too great a distance for me to apply for instructions. In addition to the general dislike entertained by those who have long inhabited Turkey to com-

plain, in matters where Europeans are concerned, to the local authorities, who are neither intelligent nor reasonable, there is this further disadvantage in having recourse to them. No Pacha or Governor ever speaks truth himself; and he cannot imagine that any one else does so. What we call a sense of duty is unknown to them. Europeans being, moreover, Christians, and united by a bond which the Turks consider as most sacred, the latter are at a loss to comprehend how these should take umbrage at the encroachments of another Christian power upon Mahometans. Let a Frenchman point out the invasions of England on the rights of the Porte, the Turks will never believe that he is actuated by motives of equity, and the desire of seeing treaties respected: the proceedings will be ascribed to some secret interest, and he will receive an answer adapted to his presumed intentions. Even at Constantinople, this is the main difficulty in treating with the Ottoman Porte. As it does not credit a word of what is uttered by any of the Ambassadors, these should know better than place the slightest reliance on any answer which they receive. An unforeseen circumstance relieved me from my embarrassment, and I took advantage of it to direct the attention of the Pacha to the affairs of Bassora. The periodical quarrel between the Pacha of Egypt and the Sultan had been renewed, and we were one day surprised by the arrival of the *Hugh Lindsay* steamer, which had been dispatched by the government of India, to offer succour to the Pacha of Bagdad against the Egyptian troops,

which were said to be then advancing into the southern provinces of the empire.

In my opinion, the policy of the English is much too highly admired. They no doubt possess better and more accurate information relative to many Asiatic affairs than the French, who do not take the trouble to study them, and who discuss them at random: but it is the resolution and perseverance of our neighbours that chiefly merit our attention, for ability is not the distinctive characteristic of English policy. It was an act of precipitation little deserving of praise, for a government to proffer succour in this manner, without having previously ascertained that war was imminent. The Bombay government had, it is true, received this intelligence from the British Consul-General in Egypt and the Resident at Bagdad; but it must have known that the former of these agents asserted regularly every year that Mehemet Ali was marching against the Sultan. As for the reports of the Resident, it ought not to have been forgotten, that this officer had already announced on three different occasions the death of Mehemet Ali, and had he been required to state his authority, it would have been found that it was simply a letter from a Jew of Damascus to a Jew of Bagdad. A prudent government would not offer succour in troops and vessels upon such uncertain premises. Besides was there not a British Ambassador at Constantinople, whose business it was, rather than that of Sir Robert Grant, to tender such assistance. Had the consent of the Porte been secured? Was it known whether the European powers had come

to any understanding on the subject? Certainly the measure in question evinced neither ability nor discretion.

It is difficult indeed to divine what mighty interest England had in preventing the Pacha of Egypt from pushing his conquests as far as he could. She probably thought that the Pacha was hostile to her; if so, she was the dupe of those who strove to persuade her of this. For my part, I spared no pains to confirm that erroneous conviction, for I knew that a friendly understanding between the Pacha and the English, if advantageous to the former, would have secured to the latter the absolute control of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. It was necessary therefore to represent Mehemet Ali as the friend of France, although that was not the case; and to treat him as a sort of potentate and a man of superior genius; although it is well known how ephemeral is his power, and how small a chance there is at the present day for a man to become a great genius, when he can neither read nor write. It would have been a wiser policy for England to have favoured, instead of counteracting the Pacha. Had he been allowed to attack, pillage, and subdue the Arabs, he would have acted like all his fellow-countrymen; but at the same time he would have introduced some order and some security into the country, and, in return to the English for their services, would have granted them a free passage by Suez and Syria.

When, on a former occasion, I had strongly opposed the encroachments of England, I met with little support from our embassy at Constantinople. Before taking any step now, I should have

therefore sheltered myself behind special instructions; but there was no time for this: it would have taken four months to receive an answer from Constantinople, and in fifteen days the Pacha of Bagdad might accept the offer which had been made to him. I resolved therefore on performing, at my own risk, what I considered to be my duty; and I must confess, that the silence which the Cabinet at home had observed upon the subject of my former proceedings, encouraged me not a little to adopt this course. Count Molé was then Minister of Foreign Affairs; as every thing was conducted with extreme regularity in that department, I concluded that my conduct had been approved, since it had not been censured. Other official agents in foreign countries who, like myself, may have found themselves placed in delicate circumstances, will, I am sure, do M. Molé the justice to admit, that while he held office they enjoyed great independence; that the correspondence was regularly kept up; and that the various questions discussed were subjects of study, and not themes for declamation. We were enabled to act with the more confidence because we had no fear of being disavowed or ridiculed, for having honestly fulfilled our duty.

I wrote to the Pacha, to dissuade him from coming to any determination until he had consulted the Sublime Porte. But as it is impossible to produce any effect on a Turk without having recourse either to money or to threats, I took care to point out to him the magnitude of the dangers which awaited him if he neglected my advice. In this way I gained sufficient time to communicate with Constantinople.

Nothing is more variable than the oriental character; and although I was certain of the first effect of my letter, I could not possibly calculate what resolutions might follow. A present, a glass of brandy or a dream will have more effect upon Turks than the most cogent logic. For a long time past, Ali Pacha had been threatening Bassora with a visit, but he had been dissuaded from that intention by the representations of the Sheikhs, through whose territory he would have had to pass, and principally by the agent of the East India Company, who negotiated for them, and thus acquired great influence. It appeared to me that the Pacha's journey might have a beneficial result, inasmuch as the intrigues which might be set on foot to induce him to accede to the propositions of the English, would be interrupted by his absence. As a further inducement to the journey, I picked a quarrel with the Governor of Bassora; I discontinued to hoist my flag, and demanded satisfaction at Bagdad. The Pacha was afraid of me; not at all on account of my official character, or of any steps which the Ambassador could take; but because I was acquainted, to a dollar, with the amount of his robberies, and I had it in my power to denounce him to the Porte. For this reason, he sent me word that he would come in person, and with the help of God, would see that I had satisfaction.

The news of the approaching visit of the Pacha created no little stir at Bassora. Had he himself communicated it to the Governor, it would not have been credited, for every one knew that the official correspondence between the authorities never con-

tains a particle of truth. People would have concluded, and correctly too, that it was only a threat to extort money. But a letter written to a European was in their eyes a more serious affair; my house was in consequence beset for several days by the inhabitants who came to ascertain the accuracy of the report. The Governor, the chief of the Aïta, the Sheikh of Zobeir, in a word, all who held any authority in the town, were the most alarmed. As for the merchants, they set their affairs in order, and many of them made preparations for quitting the country. Though no great tacticians, the Arabs were not ignorant of the great dangers attending such an expedition; and they had only to look back to the middle of the last century. The Persians were then carrying on war in this country; they had made themselves masters of Bassora, and were nevertheless obliged to make a precipitate retreat: their army was almost entirely destroyed. The truth was, that it had encountered the most terrible of enemies—famine and the Desert.

As is generally the case, the war had originated in religious differences. The Arabs, who are Sunnees, broke down the embankments of the canals, and inundated the country, thereby cutting off the communications, and the means of subsistence of their enemies. Sadek Khan, the commander of the Persian army, and brother of the famous Kerim Khan, who under the title of Vekil, was virtually Sovereign of Persia, laid siege to Bassora. That town was vigorously defended by Soliman Pacha, who was subsequently Governor of Bagdad, where he was surnamed the Great. To

the north of Bassora, and not far from the ramparts, are still to be seen bastions of earth which were thrown up at that period by the besiegers. The Persian general was certainly not deficient in bravery. At a little distance is pointed out the spot where he pitched his tent; here a slave who was handing him his pipe one day was killed by a cannon ball, when the Khan, with the utmost coolness, asked for another pipe. At length, when Soliman Pacha had exhausted all his provisions and ammunition, he was forced to surrender. Accompanied by the Cadi, an Armenian, and a Catholic, each with his sword suspended round his neck, he approached the conqueror, and delivered up the town which the Persians sacked. It was soon afterwards that a great disaster befell the Persian army, and on the death of the Vekil, Kerim Khan, his brother returned to Bushire, to which place he conveyed his prisoner. The Porte, with more generosity than it would now-a-days exhibit, paid the ransom of Soliman Pacha, who was released on the conclusion of peace. The government of Bagdad was given to him as a reward for his bravery.

At length we heard that the Pacha had actually encamped without the walls of Bagdad, near the Bassora gate, in spite of Colonel Taylor's efforts to stop him. That Resident was reported to have offered twenty four thousand pounds on behalf of the Sheikhs of the great tribes of the Montefiks, Ben Ilam, and Chahab, to induce the Pacha not to displace them, and to forego the campaign. The Pacha rejected the offer, and appointed

as their successors some of their relations who resided at his court. This convinced every one that he was in earnest. His next step was to get possession, by fair means or foul, of the boats on the river. The inhabitants were hunted down to be made sailors of; a supply of provisions was procured by the pillage of the warehouses; and the preparations being completed, he set out towards the close of the season. The people of Bagdad had at last the prospect of a few months of repose.

The strength of the army was estimated as follows:—The regular troops under the command of Sarcoch Pacha, (the drunken Pacha) amounted, it was said, to ten thousand men; I counted only six hundred; their regular cavalry, which was set down at twenty thousand men, did not exceed two thousand, including the Pacha's household and servants; as for the Arabs, they did not follow the army regularly, and their number varied according to circumstances. I do not believe that the Pacha had six thousand men under arms during the campaign; but this did not prevent his representing at Constantinople that he was at the head of ninety thousand men; at the same time applying to the Porte for money to pay that number. The artillery consisted of six field pieces, and three or four indifferent mortars; but was quite sufficient to frighten the Arabs.

Small as this force was, it was no easy matter to lead it a distance of a hundred leagues, through the Deserts which it had to cross. The army advanced along the right bank of the river by

easy marches, while the flotilla dropped down under its protection. There was no hope of pillage, no chance of any of those excesses which Turkish armies are so fond of. The Arabs, who watched the motions of the Pacha, made way for him when he approached, and as soon as he had passed, returned and pitched their tents in the accustomed spot. When he sent the newly appointed Sheikhs, under the protection of his soldiers, to take possession of their posts, every living creature fled before them; those whom they had come to supersede had disappeared with their treasures, their tents, and their cattle. The presence of the Turks made it impossible to effect these removals so conveniently as when gold and treachery alone are employed.

When Davoud Pacha, who had a practical knowledge of these countries, had an enterprize to execute, he did not place himself at its head, but contrived to foment quarrels and warfare among the Arab tribes. For instance, he was on one occasion desirous of superseding the Sheikh of the Ben Ilam tribe by another member of the same family; he conferred the investiture on the new object of his choice with great pomp, and allowed him to remain at Bagdad for several months to make his preparations. Meanwhile the attachment of the Ben Ilam tribe to its chief was shaken by the neighbouring Sheikhs, who had received instructions to that effect. The new competitor exerted himself for the same purpose, and made presents and promises in abundance. The campaign was not opened till all was well-nigh settled. Then the newly-appointed Sheikh set out with *éclat*, the Pacha allow-

ing some of his soldiers to accompany him, rather to do him honour than to fight. Those who had been deposed seldom attempted to resist; oftener indeed they sought refuge after a time at the Pacha's court, and strove to regain his favour. These wars were by no means terrible, for the women even took part in them. If the *kout*, or house of a Sheikh, was besieged, his daughters, decked with their jewels, would go up to the terrace and warble forth martial strains. These were most frequently extemporary effusions, to this effect:

"I am young, I am handsome, and love warriors: I should like for a husband one who can wield the spear and manage a horse. How delightful it is to break the teeth of one's enemies and to see them rolling in the dust! Who will bring me the head of the foe who attacks us? I will not veil my face before him."

The combat over, if the assailants had been victorious, the ladies descended from the terrace, chatted with the victors, and insisted on their right to their culinary and other domestic utensils. They were always exempt from injury, and often succeeded by their resistance in saving their relations. Ali Pacha had pursued a different system. When he wished to overthrow a Sheikh, he sent his Aïtas to effect this; these men did not conduct themselves with so much moderation as the Arabs, but according to their custom, slaughtered, ravished, and pillaged. Nevertheless this method was not found to answer more than once. The next Sheikh who was threatened with attack, sent his treasures into the Desert, and dispatched his harem to the very person appointed to succeed him. He then wrote to him as follows:

"We are relations, and yet you bring Turks amongst us; though you know that they will dishonour my wives, who are of your own family. To avoid such a disgrace I send them to you."

It was for these reasons that the deposed Sheikh of the Ben Ilam tribe sought refuge in the mountains of Persia. The chief of the Montefiks had betaken himself to the Desert. Neither of them had sent the provisions demanded for the expedition. In consequence the army advanced slowly, and reached Corna without seeing an enemy. The Pacha made preparations for crossing to the left bank of the Tigris at that place, fearing, not without reason, that the first act of his soldiers would be to sack Bassora, if he marched to the city along the right bank of the Euphrates.

The halt which the army was obliged to make till a bridge of boats could be thrown over the river, afforded an opportunity for sending to compliment his Excellency on his approaching arrival. In Turkey such compliments are not confined to a mere letter, but are accompanied by presents. My house was in consequence invaded by Persian confectioners, for the purpose of preparing a variety of syrups and sweetmeats destined for the Pacha. These preparations for merrymaking, however, were made at a most inauspicious moment. The sickly season had set in, and almost all of us had been laid up with fever. Those who had escaped death were but just beginning to recover. M. Raymond, my interpreter, whom I dispatched to the Pacha,

on his return three days afterwards, found his youngest brother dead and buried, and his eldest brother attacked by the contagion. The flattering reception he had met with, and the shawl which had been wrapped round his head, were a poor consolation for this affliction.

As for Ibrahim Agha, my Janissary, who had accompanied M. Raymond, his imperturbable coolness and unconcern astonished me more and more: brother Jean, in "*Compère Mathieu*" was quite a tyro to him. Several of his friends and relations had died without his having evinced the slightest symptom of grief or regret. On his arrival at Corna, he had taken it upon himself to visit in my name all those from whom he expected to receive presents, which by the way he often exacted without much ceremony. He confessed to me that this trip had put three hundred francs in his pocket. He placed himself on a footing of perfect equality with the Pacha, into whose presence he was admitted; told him his opinion of the expedition, pointed out the persons whom he considered fitted for certain posts; and when he was presented with a robe of honour, criticised its cut and quality, estimated it to be worth about fifty francs, and not considering it of sufficient value, claimed forty francs in money to boot. His lofty stature, his noble and majestic mien, no doubt created an impression in his favour, for he not only obtained all that he wanted, but became at once a favourite with the Pacha, with whom he went to chat in his leisure hours. The remainder of his time was spent in drinking brandy with Sarcoch

Pacha, the commander of the regular troops, or other grandees at the Pacha's court.

Three brothers, who were Arabs, and had amassed immense fortunes in trading with India, in order to escape the exactions of the Governor of Bassora, had erected at the distance of two leagues from the town, on the opposite side of the river, a house which served them for a fortress. It was at this period abandoned and falling to ruin ; under the walls of this building the Pacha encamped after crossing the river at Corna. Any orders which might have been issued to the troops forbidding their entry into the town would have been absolutely useless without the adoption of preventive measures. The precaution had therefore been taken to anchor the flotilla near the shore, opposite the camp, while the masters of the country vessels did not venture from the other side, knowing that they would have immediately been seized, and have received stripes in payment for their services. A few great personages alone visited Bassora. I was thus obliged, notwithstanding the state of my own health and that of those around me, to pay my official visit to the Pacha amidst the uproar of a camp. Accompanied by an interpreter and Ibrahim Agha, I crossed the river. The latter had just buried his nephew ; he said not a word about his loss, but did not appear to be in his usual good humour. He had merely thrown his handkerchief over his turban, upon pretext of screening himself from the sun. After a tedious passage by water, we landed, and my boat was immediately seized by the

crowd, eager to reach Bassora. Luckily Sarcoch Pacha had sent some of his regular soldiers to guard it. I got off with a volley of that abuse which Mahometans love to bestow so prodigally upon Christians.

The form of the camp was circular, and sentinels were posted round it at small distances. I proceeded towards the centre, where the principal tent of the Pacha was pitched. We were first received in that where he slept; at the moment of our arrival it was occupied by dervishes, beggars, and astrologers, all dressed in the most whimsical manner. The Pacha himself was by profession a dervish, and prided himself on his skill in reading the stars. He had constantly some of the fraternity about him, and delighted in their learned conversation. I had met with many of these worthy characters, and had often been struck with their filthy habits and the disorder of their hair and beard, as well as their incredible impudence; but I must confess that those, whom I found on this occasion on so intimate a footing with his Excellency, surpassed in these respects all I had yet met with.

After waiting for a few minutes, I was introduced to the Pacha. I found him seated, or rather reclining, on a small carpet, and dressed in the new military uniform. He was short and fat, with his trowsers of brown cloth reaching to his arm-pits, a waistcoat remarkable for its vulgar look; while an immense red cap over a large and round face, set off with a red beard, gave him an extremely grotesque appearance. He was a drunkard and

debauchee, and though possessed of good natural abilities, had, at first sight, a stupid and heavy look. He seemed to be about sixty years of age, and his habits were said to be milder than those of the generality of his order. He had this advantage over many of them, that he at least could read, but this was almost the extent of his acquirements. The Governor of Bassora and other persons of consequence, among whom I observed the celebrated Turki Bilmez, were seated around him, whilst he gravely rolled a chaplet between his fingers.

Scarcely had I taken my place, exchanged the customary compliments, smoked a pipe and taken coffee, when our attention was unexpectedly called to military matters. A man suddenly rushed into the tent, and reported that the inhabitants of Mohamera had taken possession of a post belonging to the Governor of Bassora. It was forthwith resolved that one of vessels of the flotilla should be sent to drive out the enemy, and the captain was introduced. He was a Candiot, and had sense enough to comprehend that he had little chance of success, if he set out without soldiers, ammunition, provisions and money. He represented all this without much circumlocution to the Governor of Bassora, whom the matter immediately concerned. From observations they proceeded to abuse, and then to a violent quarrel, which, ended in the triumph of the captain. The Candiot told the Governor, amongst other things, and in presence of his Excellency, that it was a disgrace to him to have given the appointment of Mutselim to a scurry Arab of Aleppo, who knew nothing of business;

who was as cowardly as a cat, and so mean and avaricious that no one would serve him. The Governor replied, that he would furnish butter, rice, bread, cheese, and a barrel of English gunpowder; each of these promises having been elicited by a volley of abuse from his antagonist. He had hardly recovered from his defeat when the conversation turned upon an English man-of-war which had brought letters to Mohamera, and afterwards anchored off the very town, against which the present expedition was directed. Ali Pacha had no decided taste for military operations, and nothing would have given him more joy than to have seen the Sheikh of the Chahabs make his submission, pay his tribute, and promise more obedience for the future. On these conditions he would most cheerfully have sacrificed the new functionary whom he had chosen, and whom he had brought with him for the purpose of installing by force. The position of this unfortunate man was truly deplorable. Beyond promises, he had nothing to offer the Pacha, and when any difficulty arose he had to bear the brunt of all complaints. The meanest soldier in the army ascribed every privation to him, and every imaginable malediction was showered upon him. Attended by four wretched-looking servants, he seemed rather on his way to execution than to victory.

The rebels however made no conciliatory advances; they merely sent a few horsemen to observe at a distance the movements of the army. The presence of an English vessel of war before the enemy's capital, coupled with the British Resident's hos-

tility to the expedition, was a further ground for apprehension. The Pacha asked me what course he ought to pursue under these circumstances, and I gave him my opinion in the most unreserved manner, although I knew very well that it would be repeated elsewhere. The conduct of the English Resident had offended me, and moreover I was extremely dissatisfied to see the English treat this country as if it really were a dependency of the East India Company's. I assured his Excellency aloud, and in full divan, that he, having been entrusted with the government of the Province by the Sublime Porte, had an unquestionable right to decide what places it was proper for vessels to anchor in. That if under present circumstances, and when he was on the point of attacking Mohamera, the English vessel was in the way, he had only to write to the commander, desiring him to leave the place, and the order would be obeyed. Lastly, that having myself been a witness of all the intrigues which had been set on foot to establish British authority in that part of the Sultan's dominions, I had long ago advised the Governor of Bassora to act upon these principles, and to prohibit the English from visiting Mohamera.

Turks have no notion of the law of nations, and those present inferred, from my observations, that all foreign vessels which entered the Euphrates were under the Pacha's orders. At any rate, my friend Captain Sharp, who commanded the vessel in question, was requested shortly afterwards to retire from before Mohamera; enraged no doubt at being deprived of the power of interfering, he set sail, and left for good, to the infinite satisfaction of the Pacha.

No other incident of importance occurred during that visit to the Pacha. On quitting his presence, I went to pay my respects to Sarcoch Pacha, but we were scarcely seated, before his attendance was required by his superior. This saved me from the infliction of hearing the execrable attempt at European music, which he had made preparations for playing out of compliment to me. As the order for his attendance on Ali Pacha came unexpectedly, Sarcoch Pacha's guard was not in readiness; but I noticed that it was immediately called out, and that the commander of the regular troops was very cautious not to appear before his superior without a numerous escort. I went over the camp counted the tents, with a view to calculate as nearly as possible the strength of the army, and then returned home worn out with fatigue and disgust. Nor was I without uneasiness as to the issue of the campaign. The Pacha unquestionably had a force sufficient to take so insignificant a place as Mohamera; but there is such a want of order in Asiatic armies; there is so much ignorance and so little judgment that every thing depends on chance.

When my memory recurred to other enterprises similar to Ali Pacha's, and which had ended in complete disaster, I dreaded lest a similar fate might await his expedition. On the slightest reverse, this army would evidently be undone. The Arabs would flock from all quarters to destroy it; Bassora would be pillaged, and many years might elapse before anything like order could be restored. A circumstance, which shows with what negligence the Turks carry on war, made me more uneasy as to the issue. I had expressed a wish to see the

maps which they used, but discovered that they had none. They scarcely knew whither they were going, and sent their engineer to me for information. The man was a furrier by trade, and actually knew not North from South. I made hastily, and from such data as I could procure, a sketch of the country, and had the Turkish names of the places inserted. M. Raymond delivered it to the Pacha, who said he understood it, which however I much doubt. He seemed pleased with my attention, and Ibraham Agha, turning the circumstance to account, contrived to earn thirty francs by it.

At last the army set out, and a few days afterwards we learned that Mohamera had been taken without any serious resistance. A few bombs had sufficed to put the enemy to flight; the troops meeting with no obstacles, had entered the town before orders had been issued to that effect; and every soldier went immediately in quest of plunder. If the number of victims to violence has been over-rated, I am at all events certain, that it was utterly impossible to exaggerate the pillage, for every thing in the place was seized by the soldiery, who carried off even the women and children; when the place was completely stripped, the Pacha and his troops gratified themselves by burning it. I shall not enter into a detail of all the enormities which were committed; but in order to show in what light these barbarians view military operations, I will relate a characteristic incident. The town had been taken without any resistance; and a tailor, who was ignorant in all probability of the important event, was at work in his shop. One of the victors espied him, rushed upon him, and dragged him before the Pacha, who

ordered him to undergo a severe bastinado as a punishment for his assurance; his tormentors exclaiming: "What! you scoundrel! while the Vizier gives himself the trouble, the fatigue, of coming all the way from Bagdad, to besiege and take the town, you sit sewing away as if nothing had happened!" People complained of the excessive lenity of the Pacha, and observed that the fellow deserved to lose his head.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

Pillage of Mohamera—Remonstrances of Persia—Digression relative to the Siege of Varna, &c.

The first intelligence of the reduction of Mohamera was brought to us by those who had made the most booty, and who came to dispose of it at Bassora. The Pacha reserved to himself all the dates, of which there was a large quantity in warehouse and ready to be shipped. Numbers of soldiers came straggling into the town, and were to be seen offering for sale stuffs and copper utensils which they had secured. Dealers who prided themselves on their honesty refused to purchase these articles openly, observing that they considered them as obtained by robbery. According to oriental practice, a state of warfare does not establish an order of things different from that existing in time of peace; to rob and to conquer are synonymous. It was not therefore scruples of conscience alone that prevented the tradesmen from trafficking in these articles of plunder. What they most dreaded

was, that the transactions might afterwards be inquired into; and that they might be prosecuted by the rightful owners for having the goods in their possession. In that case, indeed, they would have been forced to restore them, without any question as to how they came by them. The Jews did not fail to turn such an opportunity as this to good account; they however bought small lots only at a time, and re-sold their purchases to richer individuals. A soldier belonging to the regular troops made a very rich capture; he had possessed himself of a quantity of pearls, and came one evening to my house to request shelter. He had thrown aside his uniform, and assumed an Arab dress. As he represented himself to be a deserter, I did not feel disposed to grant his request; thereupon he confided to me the secret of his good luck, in the hope of inducing me to allow him to pass the night under my roof. He was afraid lest Sarcoch Pacha, the commander of the regular troops, should hear of the booty he had made, and cause him to be murdered in order to obtain possession of his treasures.

His fears appeared to me ridiculous, and I sent him about his business. At length some Armenians received him into their house, and supplied him with the means of returning to Bagdad. Upon subsequent inquiry I ascertained that the man's fears were by no means imaginary. Any soldiers, who happened to make prize of articles of considerable value, ran a great risk of falling victims to the rapacity of their commander; it frequently happened, too, that they were murdered by their own comrades for the sake of dividing their spoil.

With the victors arrived also great numbers of the victims of the catastrophe. Some of them came to beg alms after having seen their houses pillaged and burned; others solicited contributions for the purpose of ransoming their relations from bondage. Among others there was an Aïta, who had taken the wife and daughter of a Persian, and as the latter was anxious to ransom them, the whole party had come together to Bassora. The Persian first waited upon the Mutselim, who promised to contribute a small sum, then on the richest of his fellow-countrymen, Mehemet Kazerouni, who was my neighbour, and afterwards on me, and every one else whom he thought likely to assist him. The Aïta accompanied him in these visits, but all endeavours to move him to compassion, or to moderate his demand were fruitless. He asked about £16, and when any one remonstrated with him, he maintained that the price was low; he extolled the beauty and the amiable dispositions of both mother and daughter, enlarged upon their personal charms, and appealed with cruel simplicity to the Persian's own testimony. This group perambulated the streets of Bassora for eight days, before the necessary sum could be got together. A much greater number of the unfortunate people had fled to Persia, others had escaped by water. The Sheikh of the Chahabs had retired towards Dorak, his capital; whilst Ahmed, Sheikh of Mohamera, had taken refuge on board of a vessel in the river which belonged to him, and which was ready to set sail.

When the Pacha had gathered in his dates and sold them, and had installed the new Sheikh, he

was at a loss what to do next. He would fain have pursued Sheikh Jabber towards Dorak, but that expedition was so beset with difficulties that there was no chance of success. He next thought of advancing to the sea-coast, and reducing to obedience the Sheikh of Gren. He even summoned that chief to appear before him; but the Sheikh, who lacked neither years nor cunning, declared, amidst protestations of submission, that if his Excellency approached, he would betake himself with his tribe to an island on which his capital is situated. For want of vessels to pursue him to that retreat, the Pacha was obliged to abandon this project. Finally, and like a good Turk, he determined to leave every thing to Providence, and stay where he was.

The Ramazan, which is a season of repose in Mahometan countries, was near at hand, and supplied the Pacha with a plausible pretext for remaining inactive; the army continued encamped, while the Pacha awaited the turn of events. About this time we heard at Bassora that Persia had demanded explanations regarding the attack on Mohamera, which she alleged to be within her territory. It was also reported that this step had been taken at the instigation of the English Resident at Bushire, who was annoyed at the destruction of the place, the possession of which he coveted for the purpose of making it the centre of the packet system on the river. The Persian envoy presented himself in the name of the Governor of Schuster, and with that pomp which the Turks designate *calabalik*, the plain English of which is, that he brought with him a few trunks and four or five

servants, one of whom had charge of his master's pipe.

The Pacha knew no more than the Ambassador whether Mohamera really belonged to Persia or not. He received the envoy coldly, and both maintaining a prudent reserve, talked only of the power of their respective sovereigns. After this Ambassador's departure, I was apprehensive of other proceedings of the same kind, and had my fears too lest the Persians, taking advantage of the unsatisfactory answers of the Pacha, should assert that the right was on their side. This would have been a reason for attacks and hostilities, that national animosity would too readily have prompted, and which would moreover have afforded the English such a pretext as they ardently desired for inducing the belligerents to accept their intervention. With the help of Herbelot's *Bibliothéque Orientale*, in which I found an account of the origin of the Chahabs, and with what I already knew of the history of the country, I was not long in drawing up a note, setting forth the indisputable rights of the Porte. M. Raymond translated it into Turkish, and went to deliver it to the Pacha, accompanied by Ibrahim Agha, whom I had occasion to send to him, to present the compliments customary at the season of the Ramazan.

As I would not have the reader suppose that vanity has led me to introduce this affair, I shall enter into some details in order to show that in this instance, as well as in most cases wherein one is successful with the Turks, there is little to be proud of. M. Raymond had taken care to include a few bottles of brandy among the ostensible pre-

sents destined for his Excellency. He took up his quarters with Soliman Effendi, the Pacha's Secretary, whom he had known at Bagdad. In the evening he plied his host with drink till he was tipsy, and made him divulge all his master's affairs; next day he sent him to announce his arrival to the Pacha, and instructed him to drop a hint that his stock of spirits was not exhausted, as this was likely to ensure him a gracious reception. Nor was he mistaken. Ali Pacha sent for him immediately, treated him with attention, and at last honoured him with the *calvet*, or a private audience. The other persons present withdrew, and my note was then communicated. Its contents seemed to please him.

On the re-admission of the public, Ibrahim Agha caused my present of sweetmeats and confectionary to be brought. The Pacha directed his attendants to give my Janissary a robe of honour. Ibrahim expostulated, and expressed his surprise at the Pacha's seeking to overload him with clothes, in such hot weather. He reminded his Excellency that he had previously received a similar robe at Corna, and that it was not worth much; that he did not want another, but that money would be more acceptable. His wishes were complied with, but as the coffers of the Pacha were empty, M. Raymond had to lend his Excellency's secretary about forty francs to complete the present to Ibrahim Agha, who received in all about a hundred francs (£4). The forty francs were in the sequel punctually repaid, to my no small surprise.

Besides delivering the note relative to the fron-

tier question M. Raymond had to procure the testimony of the Pacha in a private matter. A Christian of Bagdad died at Hodeida, leaving a large fortune amassed in trade. The agents of Mehemet Ali Pacha had seized it, and an old servant brought the news to the relations of the deceased. He had but one brother, who executed all the necessary deeds before the Cadi of Bassora, and empowered the messenger to return and take possession of the inheritance. I recommended him to M. Lesseps, who kindly granted him his protection; but the Pacha of Egypt, not at all disposed to disgorge, insisted on the personal attendance of the heir, furnished with documents substantiating his identity. The old servant had in consequence returned, and it became necessary to apply to the Pacha for the certificate in question. M. Raymond explained the business to Soliman Effendi, the secretary, who after having had something to drink, drew up the documents which were required. The Pacha, having likewise been supplied with brandy ordered his door to be closed against all intruders. His secretary introduced M. Raymond, who begged of the Pacha as a personal favour (*kater*) to sign the papers which he laid before him, when his Excellency affixed his seal without further inquiry. This is a specimen of the manner in which public documents are prepared in Turkey.

This business being settled, M. Raymond assisted the secretary in writing the Pacha's despatches to the Sublime Porte. They stated that his Excellency had just conducted a most glorious expedition, and had led an army of ninety thousand

men as far as the sea coast; and that the expenses had ruined him. My note was made use of to exaggerate the political services he had rendered to the state. My messenger then began to think of returning, but Ibrahim Agha was not yet satisfied with what he had received from the Pacha. He was particularly desirous to get Ali Usta re-instated as Governor of Bassora. That personage had proceeded from Bombay to London, and thence had reached Constantinople in safety. Having received a full pardon from the Sultan, he had returned to Bagdad whence he applied to the Pacha for employment; and besought his friends, among whom was Ibrahim Agha, to lend him their support. His application failed, though he was very near obtaining his request.

These political occupations did not by any means divert the attention of the worthy Ibrahim from other matters. As a Turk, he paid visits to many of the Aïtas, and congratulated them on the rich harvest which they had reaped. It was not right in his opinion, that a brother in arms who chanced to meet with them, after such a windfall, should leave them empty-handed. By appeals of this sort, he contrived to collect kettles, saucepans, coffee-pots, and other copper utensils, which he said were wanting in his own kitchen. He honoured Sarcoch Pacha with a visit, and observing a quantity of corn heaped up in the court, begged of his Excellency to allow him to take some of it for his domestic use. His request was granted. Thereupon he hired a boat, and waiting for an opportunity when the Pacha was from home, carried off the entire stock. Though he took care to

despatch the boat forthwith, he nevertheless went back to thank the donor, and to laugh at the trick ; and remained drinking with him all night. On his return with M. Raymond to Bassora, Ibrahim Agha declared that, thanks to God, (*elamdullah*) the excursion had been a lucky one for him ; that he was almost tempted to believe that Ali Pacha had undertaken the campaign for the purpose of making the fortune of the French Janissary ; and that if his Excellency remained in the country, he would pluck him of many more of his feathers.

Before long, a second Persian Ambassador made his appearance, and remonstrated on behalf of the Governor of Shiraz. There was nothing about him to inspire much respect ; he affected no display ; in short, there was no *calabalik* with him. The Pacha gave him a favourable reception, and even made him some presents. He had scarcely taken his departure, when a third Ambassador from the eunuch Manucher Khan, *Emin-el-Daulet*, prime minister of Persia, and Governor-General of Farsistan, arrived with great pomp ; he was however treated with marked indignity, and beaten. From that time till recently, Persia made no further remonstrance, that I know of, in regard to the affair of Mohamera. The manner in which the Pacha treated these Ambassadors, cold towards the first, polite towards the second, and beating the last, need not excite much astonishment. In Asia, Ambassadors are not always invested with a public character, nor are they all of the same stamp.

For instance, a person who had been formerly servant to M. Rousseau, our Consul at Bagdad, pretended that he had advanced money to our

government, and resolved to go to Paris, and claim repayment. He offered to the King of Persia to bring him back presents, if he would furnish him with credentials as Ambassador. These were addressed to Napoleon, who had then returned from Elba. The Ambassador, Davoud Zadour, was already on his way to Europe, when the news of the restoration of Louis XVIII. arrived. Messengers were therefore despatched after him, who in order to rectify his credentials, so as to address them to the new Sovereign, robbed and maltreated him. In spite of this mishap, he figured with great *éclat* at Paris, where he passed for a personage of importance; but on his return home, no more respect was paid to him than to any other Armenian. Subsequently, an individual named Sady Khan, who had once been servant to an English Colonel, arrivedn in London as *chargé d'affaires* of the Crown Prince of Persia. He was furnished no doubt with the requisite papers; and, availing himself of the credit which they procured him, he entered into extensive scpculations. On his return to Teheran, he opened a small shop in the bazaar. These examples will suffice to show that in Asia an Ambassador may be ill-treated almost with impunity.

During the Pacha's stay at Mohamera, an active intercourse was kept up between that place and Bassora; and the luckless Governor had not a moment's peace. Not only did such of the inhabitants, as had ground for complaint, wait on the Pacha and solicit his assistance, but he was obliged to restore a large portion of the sums which he had formerly extorted. Soliman Effendi the secretary,

and other persons of influence, strove to excite these complaints, not out of enmity to the Governor, but because it was their profession. They lived upon litigation and disputes; and they would not touch any business till the sum which they were to receive for its accomplishment was agreed upon. When the Mutselim wished to avert a decision, he was obliged to open his purse like any other person. Thus I saw agents from Mecca repair to the Pacha, and return with an order to take possession again of property which the Governor had seized.

The widow of the Governor *ad interim*, who had been recently poisoned, regained possession of the fortune of her husband which had been sequestrated, and also of the money which she had been deprived of. The number of cases which were decided in this way was prodigious; but it is true, the principles of equity were seldom consulted in these decisions, termed *bouyourdou*. That the reader may appreciate the length to which this spirit of rapacity is carried, I shall mention one fact. When the Pacha returned from Mohamera, Soliman Effendi lodged in M. Raymond's house, and carried on there the sort of business which I am describing. In the course of a fortnight, he earned six thousand piastres, or about four hundred and eighty pounds, and yet complained of the insignificance of his profits. His occupation consisted in drawing up orders, and in awaiting a favourable opportunity for obtaining the Pacha's approval and signature. The very next day, he would be preparing orders of a totally contrary tenour, and getting them signed.

Among the persons whom I knew to be employed in the Pacha's army, there were three physicians: one an Armenian, another a Greek, and the third a Ragusan. The first had been taken prisoner by the Russians at Varna. As the particulars which he gave me of the siege of that place, coincide with what I had previously learned from a Greek interpreter, who had shared a similar fate, I am induced to preserve them with the view of throwing light on the history of that period. What I am about to relate is probably nearer the truth than the Russian bulletins, or the reports of individuals who either did not understand the language, or were not on the spot.

Yussuf Pacha was Governor of the town, and the Turkish fleet came from Constantinople to his assistance. He had four thousand irregular troops, and some regulars were sent to his aid. Varna was well fortified, having several redoubts, one of which commanded all the others; and the possession of this insured that of the town. The Commander-in-chief of the Ottoman troops in that portion of the empire did not reside at Varna, but in the neighbourhood of Shoumla; I rather think that it was Mehemet Reschid Pacha. The Turkish forces were estimated at about thirty thousand men: composed of the regular troops of Izzet Mehemet Pacha, the irregular soldiers of Yussuf Pacha, and the Mahometan population of the town, which, as we all know, never fails to take up arms against unbelievers. To these troops should be added the Christian population of Greeks and Armenians, whom, according to custom, the Turks forced to fight, and

to aid in the construction of the works of fortification. After all, the assistance which the latter rendered to the besieged was fully counterbalanced by their good offices to the besiegers, whom they apprized of every thing that took place in the town; and to whom they ever and anon dispatched messengers and intelligence.

When the Russians first made their appearance, their number was about three thousand. They advanced by the main road to reconnoitre. The Turks, according to their laudable custom, had no sentinels posted, so that these three thousand Russians had time to throw up some works, and to approach very near to the town. They were not however in sufficient force to make a serious attack; besides, they had no artillery, whereas that of the Turks was formidable. This did not deter them from skirmishing, and they had uniformly the advantage, until the Ottoman commanders, roused at last from their apathy, resolved upon a general attack on the enemy. But this attack was conducted with such little judgment and order, that the Russian loss was infinitely smaller than that of the Turks. Scenes similar to the following were of ordinary occurrence. Some Pacha or other would observe, whilst giving audience:

"These infidels, who have approached so near, are extremely stupid and very audacious!" "That they are—that they are," was the reply; "and if you will only give orders, we will go to-morrow and cut off every one of their heads."

On the following day, all who chose went out to fight, and when they were tired, returned into the town to smoke or drink coffee.

Nothing was more common than to hear colloquies of this sort:

"Ah, Mehemet, we are on our way to have a shot at those unbelievers, will you go with us?"

"With all my heart; but sit down for a moment. Let us first smoke a pipe, and take coffee."

Great numbers quitted the field of battle with the wounded; all these runaways alleging that they were their near relations, or friends.

"We have been peppering the infidels," said they; "and our friend here has been wounded: we could not well quit him, and have accompanied him back."

When at last the general attack took place, and the Russians were forced to retreat, the Turks who might certainly have annihilated an enemy, whose number was so insignificant, did not even take the trouble to pursue them. They returned to the town, to congratulate each other on their victory. Foreseeing, however, a fresh approach of the enemy, that they might not this time be taken unawares, they posted videttes outside the town; but they imagined that, because the Russians had arrived by the main road on the first occasion, they would necessarily come by it again, therefore neglected to guard any other. A corps of the besiegers took up a position in the gardens, close to the town, while the Turks were watching the main road. A smart fire of musketry, accompanied by a few cannon-shot, gave notice of the enemy's approach, about which the Turks gave themselves very little concern, observing: "It is now winter, there is no fruit in our gardens; we have nothing to do there; what matters it

whether the Russians post themselves there or not?"

Whilst the Turks were reasoning in this strain, the Russians were throwing up a formidable battery; shortly afterwards the Czar's fleet made its appearance before the town, and immediately opened upon it a fire of balls and shells.

"It is high time," exclaimed Izzed Pacha, one day "to dislodge these infidels, and to cut off their heads. We will attack them to-morrow; but it must be done quietly, and by stealth."

Next day the Turks accordingly sallied forth, and the Pacha mounted the ramparts to watch how his troops behaved. As in Ottoman armies each soldier marches where he pleases, the brave soon part company from the cowardly. The former dash in with impetuosity; the others follow more cautiously. The courageous forming by far the smaller number, the Russians, who are well acquainted with the Turkish mode of fighting, do not fire till the enemy has approached very near. The foremost of the assailants then rush on headlong, penetrate into the ranks, and perform some act of bravery before they fall; but the main body runs away on the first discharge of artillery. Such was the way in which the troops of Izzed Pacha behaved. One of his servants, who had fought his way into the Russian redoubt, and cut off the head of a soldier, brought it away and presented it to his master: "It is all over," he exclaimed, "the redoubt is taken. I killed this fellow alongside of his gun."

The Pacha concluded that the victory was his when he beheld his troops returning in disorder

Furious with rage, he began to fling stones at the fugitives who sought to re-enter the town.

"Scoundrels! sons of dogs!" he cried, "have you no shame? Go back, go, and cut the throats of the infidels!"

When he saw that they were more afraid of the Russian artillery than of his imprecations, he ordered the gates of the town to be closed against the fugitives. In this sortie the Turks lost three thousand men. During the three months that the siege lasted, the Russians took successively all the outworks of the town, and not one of their attacks failed. The same success attended their naval operations: their fleet not only demolished the houses, but by a bold stroke which the besieged could neither foresee nor prevent, they captured the Turkish vessels which were in the harbour. So disgracefully was the defence conducted, that, throughout the siege, not a single projectile struck the Russian vessels, notwithstanding the incessant fire kept up upon them. The guns were, indeed, worked in an extraordinary manner. Several Turks would place themselves around a cannon: some of them smoking, others chatting. One of them would take it into his head to load the piece, fire it, and miss the mark. Another thinking himself more expert, would next try his hand, but with no better success. Frequently disputes would arise among the bystanders as to who should go and fetch ammunition. The only virtue evinced by the besieged was a remarkable disregard of danger. Habituated to the sight of human misery, and having often experienced it themselves, they were almost unsusceptible of fear. Thus, famine

began to be felt after the capture of the fleet, on board of which were their provisions: but this gave them no uneasiness. The Russians hemmed them in so closely, that they could not use their artillery; yet scarcely an effort was made to remedy this. On one occasion, they resolved to set the Christians to work upon the fortifications; and as the task was attended with some danger, the Mahometans, who directed the operations, kept at a safe distance. After one or two of the labourers had been killed, they returned in a body to the Pacha, assuring him that it was impossible to remedy the evil, or to make the artillery play. This was a most disagreeable piece of intelligence, but among the Turks there are always men ready to suggest expedients. One of this class exclaimed, on the spur of the moment: "Well, after all, what difference can it make, whether we use cannon or something else? We have powder and bombs; if we cannot use the cannon, let us throw bombs: this will be more convenient, for there will be no need to take aim." This sage advice was approved by all; and it may easily be conceived what harmless havoc the new means of defence made among the besiegers.

Meanwhile, the town was not only suffering from famine, and exposed to an incessant shower of bombs, howitzer and cannon-balls, which were destroying it, but it was also a prey to intestine strife. Izzed Mehemet Pacha was brave, and eager to defend the place, but Yussuf Pacha and his four thousand soldiers did nothing. The Pacha spent the greater part of his time in drinking, and his soldiers were notorious pillagers. When the defence

became hopeless, and the town was summoned to capitulate, Mehemet Pacha refused to surrender; not from a sense of honour, or that he cared much whether the Russians took the place or not; he acted entirely from personal motives. His Mightiness, the Sultan Mahmoud, had not troubled him with any very long instructions, but had merely taken charge of the Pacha's harem, apprizing him that if he capitulated, his wives and children should be sold; and it was on this account, that he would not listen to any proposition of surrender. When terms were offered, he exclaimed: "The devil take these Russian asses, and their flags of truce! They can do nothing without such a deal of talk. If they want the town, let them enter and take it. I shall be satisfied, for then no one at Constantinople will have a word to say against me; but I am not fool enough to sign articles of capitulation."

At the same time he did all in his power to encourage the belief at Constantinople, that if the defence proved unsuccessful, he at least was not to blame. With the same view, he wrote to Reschid Pacha, that his colleague, Yussuf, was always drunk; and that neither he nor his soldiers lent him any assistance in defending the town. The plan which he adopted, to secure the conveyance of his despatches through the enemy's army, was this. A Christian family was seized, and its head was told: "Here is a letter for Reschid Pacha. You must carry it; and if in so many days you do not bring back an answer, your children shall be hung or sold, and your wife and daughters violated."

One of these messengers, bringing an order from Reschid Pacha that the indolent Yussuf should be put to death, fell into the hands of the enemy. The Russian commander communicated this letter to the intended victim, who one fine day opened the gates of the town, and went over with his troops to the besiegers. Mehemet Pacha, when informed of the circumstance, took care not to interfere: he allowed the gates to remain open, and the Russians entered without molestation. Their Emperor was present; and he failed not to proclaim his triumph with all the emphasis customary in his country.

Among the most remarkable incidents of this siege was the adventure of a Greek, who imagined that he had rendered an important service, but was sent to prison for his pains. There was a mine formed a long time ago at Varna, which the Turks resolved upon turning to account, and which, had it been sprung, would undoubtedly have occasioned a serious loss to the enemy. The Greek, aware of the intention, deserted to the Russians, and warned them of the danger. The besiegers thereupon commenced a countermine, which they exploded, to the great astonishment and injury of the besieged. The Greek was made much of; he had the honour of being introduced to the Emperor, who presented him with a ring. All at once, the Russians took it into their heads to consider this man as a worthless spy. The Grand Duke Michael, who affects to be a wit, did not allow this opportunity to pass without quoting the adage: "We may profit by treachery, but should despise the traitor." In a word, he was

scouted by every one, as if he had committed the most infamous act. The poor wretch believed that he had fulfilled, and really did fulfil, a duty of religion and patriotism. It were preposterous, indeed, to expect that Christians, who, in fact, are treated by the Turks as miserable slaves, should feel any attachment to their oppressors, or loyalty to the sovereign of these barbarians. Owing to the light in which the conduct of the Greek was viewed, the police were soon at his heels: he was thrown into prison, and it cost him a large portion of the proceeds of the ring, which his Imperial Majesty had bestowed upon him, to procure his liberation.

If this Greek was considered as a traitor, no better usage awaited the physicians and their interpreters, who were found wearing the oriental dress. They were led before the Emperor himself, who did not then entertain those sentiments of fraternal affection which he now professes for the Grand Turk. He took the trouble to address them in a fine speech, upbraiding them as Christians, for being in the service of infidels, and for wearing the Mahometan dress. He then caused them to be examined to ascertain whether or not they were really doctors. It was a doubtful point; for no great knowledge of medicine is requisite in order to practise among the Turks. Whether they were touched by the remonstrances of the Emperor, and conceived it incumbent on them to give a proof of their repentance, or, what is much more likely, tired of the Turks and their costume, they resumed the European dress. This supplied a new theme for imperial declamation. "What," cried the Czar,

"dare they resume the dress of Christians, after polluting themselves by wearing the garb of the infidels!"

A physician from Bologna, who still retained some of the characteristics of his country, was very closely examined; and one of the distinguished personages in the imperial suite took off his turban to see if his head was shaved, alleging that this would have been infallible proof that he was a renegade. The Bolognese still having his hair, exclaimed: "*Cosa guarda? Non è di questa parte; si la desidera, gli farò veder altra cosa.*" And thereupon he very coolly requested the Emperor himself to grant him his liberty. Italy is the land of declamation and theatrical effect, and whatever approaches to either seems familiar to its inhabitants. Not at all dazzled by the Imperial splendour, the doctor said twice to his Majesty, "I am a medical man, and not a soldier; will you let me go or not?" This sally was not successful. The Czar was nettled to find that his lofty stature and majestic mien produced no effect. He immediately called Count Woronzoff, and ordered him to send off these Europeans to Siberia, and to show them no indulgence. The sentence was obeyed; but the Russians, who are humane towards all but their own countrymen, showed the prisoners much kindness and hospitality. It is even probable that they fared better in Siberia than they had done in the Ottoman service. On the return of peace, they were sent home. This banishment to the wilds of Siberia, of men who were in the Turkish service only as doctors and interpreters, appears most unreasonable. A medical man is a

citizen of all countries, and there can be nothing hostile in his profession, wherever he may exercise it. The same may be said of an interpreter. Was it then rational to punish men for having assuaged the sufferings of humanity, even among the Turks?

It was the duty of the Governor of Bassora to collect and forward the provisions necessary for the army. The different Arab Sheikhs had received orders to send their supplies to that town; some of them furnished them in part, while others paid no attention whatever to the orders. The Governor had a multitude of other commissions and many of them were very difficult to execute. Every one who came from the camp, and found impediments to the transaction of his business, applied to him. The provisions were received by a special commissary, with the title of Zakiré Agha, or chief officer of provisions. The wheat and rice were weighed in the open square or place denominated *Sift*, under the Governor's windows. The Zakiré Agha superintended this operation and committed frauds, surpassing belief, both as respects the quantity and quality of the articles; and shared the produce with the Governor. They were nevertheless attended with some danger, and gave rise to repeated acts of violence. At last, the soldiers complained to the Pacha respecting the quality of their provisions; and a *kuleyman*, known for his inflexible rigour, was sent as Moubachir to inquire into the matter. He made his appearance in the public place at a moment when he was not looked for; detected the impositions, and began to cudgel the people of the Governor and the

Zakiré Agha. These two officials witnessed the scene from the windows; but instead of remonstrating, thought it more advisable to secure the gates of the palace. This act of prudence was not superfluous, considering the extreme measures to which this Moubachir had resorted on other occasions.

One day, being directed by Davoud Pacha to investigate the conduct of a Governor, he had him bound and sent him to Bagdad; and then without further ceremony installed himself in his place. The culprits in the present instance were only subjected to a volley of abuse, and threatened with the contents of a pistol. A compromise was ultimately effected: the Moubachir pocketed his hush money, and went to assure the Pacha that the provisions were delivered out with the utmost regularity.

To get rid of those who importuned him concerning their private matters, the Governor usually had recourse to evasion; at other times, he wore out their patience by dilatory measures. Complaints without number were consequently made of him to the Pacha, so that he sometimes found it necessary to justify himself. Incessant rumours of his removal from office were circulated; hence he was obliged to make presents; and the number of robes of honour given by him was prodigious.

After a while, many necessaries became scarce in the camp, and it was time to think of returning. Such was the relaxation of discipline, that when the Mutselim sent a boat load of vegetables to the Pacha, the Aïtas attacked his

Excellency's followers, and after a fight in which one man was killed and two others wounded, they took forcible possession of the boat. Besides, winter had set in, or rather a little rain had fallen; and as the roads were rendered inconvenient by the mud, the Pacha determined to proceed to Bassora by water. The army meanwhile returned by the route by which it went; and, after a toilsome march, in which it suffered all sorts of privations, arrived before the city. The troops had to halt there for several days; the construction of a bridge of boats being attended with difficulty from the great width of the river; the strong tide in a moment sweeping away the work already completed. Justice to Ali Pacha requires that I should mention the praiseworthy solicitude which he displayed on this occasion for his troops. Surrounded with comforts in the small chamber of his palace, called *calvet*, he was aware that his fellow-soldiers would hardly fail to contrast their situation with his; and he made incessant inquiries concerning the progress of the works. He was as often assured that they were all finished; and that the *miracor*, on whom the command devolved in his absence, was about to immolate a couple of sheep before the army crossed the bridge.

The troops at last did pass over, but not without danger. The bridge vibrated like a rope, and those on foot were obliged to make use of their hands as well as their legs. Two horses were lost, but no other casualty occurred. These delays had fortunately not been useless, for they had allowed time for the heavy baggage to arrive by water; for the tents to be pitched, and for guards to be stationed at

the gates of the city. This last precaution enabled the authorities to enforce the order that had been issued, forbidding the soldiers to enter the town. The uneasiness of the Pacha, however, did not prevent him from enjoying himself after his fatigues. His secretary Soliman Effendi, lived at the house of M. Raymond. On the very first day he applied to his host for a bottle of brandy for his master, who drank the whole of it, which brought on fever. As it was then the healthy season, he soon recovered; and I went to see him several times, and the more readily, because he did not then preside at the Divan but lived in privacy. It was the duty of Mehemet Tchelebi, the Governor, to give audience, hear complaints, and afford redress.

The Turkish term *Divan* does not signify a meeting of certain functionaries, but an assembly which might almost be called a public audience, presided over by a Pacha or a Governor who alone holds forth. To interrupt him or to speak without being addressed by him, would be a breach of etiquette; were he even to utter the grossest falsehoods or the most palpable absurdities, it would be considered a great affront to contradict him, or not to approve what he says. All present know that the speaker makes not the slightest pretensions to veracity, and their only aim is to discover the drift of his harangues. That habit can only be acquired by those who have frequent intercourse with Asiatics. Not a creature cares about the truth of any statement that is made; the hearers are only anxious to find out the motive of the speaker; no matter of how trifling import the subject may be, the

chances, that a statement is true or false are about equal; when the motive is discovered, you know what to believe. It is obvious that this tendency to incredulity, and the constant practice of scrutinizing the motives of those with whom they converse, contribute to produce in Asiatics that cunning and talent for observation for which they are distinguished.

Business is not always conducted in the divan with the same gravity. One day, when I had called to see the Pacha, I heard a hubbub in the great hall; M. Raymond went to see what was the matter. The room was full of people of all ranks; some Jewish merchants were even present. The cause of the disturbance was this. Some Aïtas had received from their chief flour which had been mixed with sand, and one of them had broken a tooth. The enraged sufferer and his comrades sought their chief, and resolved to take his life. The latter had time to throw the fault upon the Governor, and affecting to share the indignation of his soldiers, put himself at their head, and threatened to put the culprit to death. This person had entered the divan; and the chief advancing, pistol in hand, towards the Governor, showed him what sort of flour had been served out. Poor Mehemet Tchelebi, in his turn, threw all the blame upon the Zakiré Agha. An altercation ensued. The Governor promised to investigate the matter; the flour was exchanged, and the scene was about to wind up as usual, that is to say, the Governor ordered a *burnous* to be given to the complainant, when the latter refused it. He threw the *burnous* over the Governor, who had the more

difficulty to disentangle himself from the garment, because he was frightened, and imagined that advantage might be taken of his awkward situation to murder him. A wag who was present, rose, ran towards the Mutselim, took the *burnous*, and threw it over his shoulders, declaring that it would afford him much pleasure to put an end to the dispute by appropriating the gift to himself. Accordingly, he walked off with it; a general laugh followed, and thus the disturbance terminated.

While Soliman Effendi lodged at M. Raymond's, I had frequent opportunities for ascertaining how public business is transacted among the Turks. Soliman was a young man, and the son of a former Divan-Effendi at Bagdad; his grandmother is said to have been a French woman, who had been sold by some means or another in this country. At all events, in 1824 I saw at the divan's residence several French medical works, which, he told me, had descended to him from his family. Soliman Effendi was the confidential friend and favourite of Ali Pacha. He repaired regularly at daybreak to his master's to receive his orders. About nine o'clock he returned home, listened to complaints, and made the necessary bargains before he would interfere. He dined at noon, and out of compliment to him, M. Raymond used frequently to invite other persons to meet him. After dinner he returned for a short time to the Pacha's, and then lay down to rest like every body else. All were again stirring at *ekindi*, or three o'clock prayers; after which there was a grand divan till evening. This

was the interval chiefly devoted to public business; and the Secretary remained at the palace until every matter was settled. He would then return home, his pockets crammed with papers and letters addressed to the Pacha, which he had to answer. In case of any urgent business, or if his master required his services, at the hour when the music of the Governor gave the signal for evening prayer, which precedes the last audience, he hastily took some refreshment, and resumed his post. Again he returned home, and when other people were asleep, proceeded stealthily to the palace carrying with him the papers ready for signature. At this hour the Pacha was usually employed in drinking, so that whenever the Secretary had a difficult job in hand, he chose it as the fittest moment for requesting his Excellency to affix the official seal. In the absence of pressing business, he copied his master's example, and gave himself up to intemperance. Far from making any secret of his correspondence, on his return home, he would spread out his papers and hand them to M. Raymond to read, and it happened occasionally that the latter came to consult me how to answer them.

It was in this manner that I gained a knowledge of the revenue of the Pachalic; I thus obtained also a fresh proof of the irregularity with which the English negotiate at Bagdad. Colonel Chesney had the firmans of the Grand Seignor necessary for navigating the Euphrates, and the Pacha was bound to respect them; nevertheless, Sir Robert Grant, Governor of Bombay, wrote direct to Ali Pacha, seeking to negotiate upon the

same subject with him. My advice was to return an evasive answer, and it was acted upon. I do not lay claim on that account to any great merit; the English might, if they pleased, have been as well acquainted as myself with what the Pacha was doing, and have read his correspondence. Soliman Effendi was not a whit more indiscreet than any other secretary: in fact, the Orientals conceal only what immediately affects their life or purse. At Constantinople, even, there is not a diplomatic note concerning the Europeans, the perusal of which may not be procured for a cup of coffee. Being composed by the different Dragomans, in the name of the Porte, when the subject excites the least interest among the Mahometans their contents are known in the bazaar before their existence even is communicated to the European officials.

It must not be supposed that the presence of the Pacha's retinue and army were of any benefit to the town of Bassora. So far from this, it was not till after their departure that a single trading vessel ventured into the port; commercial business was at a stand; and the inhabitants shut themselves up in their houses to escape the rapacity and extortions of the officers and soldiery. It was not uncommon for drunken men to discharge their pistols in the streets; labourers were forcibly seized and obliged to work without relaxation and without pay. The bargemen, when they ventured out, were generally detained one or two days, owing to the soldiers, in successive parties, getting into their boats, and forcing their owners to convey

them about for nothing. Porters, water-carriers, shopkeepers of all classes, were not better treated. The brandy-merchant, who farmed his privilege, found it expedient to build up his doorway; and to make a hole in the wall, at a considerable height, through which, by means of a cord, he received the money and afterwards delivered his goods. Many respectable merchants fled from the town, and trade was quite stagnant. A feeling of dread, unknown in Europe, was general. Every day, labourers and workmen who refused to toil without pay were beaten or disabled by sword-cuts, and sometimes shot.

Complaints were useless, even when made by persons of influence. If a Christian had been killed whose life is valued at not more than five pounds; or a Jew, whose life is not reckoned worth more than one-third of a Christian's, what hope of redress could be entertained by them when Arabs, true believers, were massacred with impunity? The Hindoo sailors took especial care to keep out of the way at this time. They are considered as men *without books;* they have neither the Old Testament of the Jews, nor the Gospel of the Christians, nor the Koran of the Mahometans: books which are reputed as sacred by the latter. They are consequently viewed as beings without soul; brutes whose lives are spared out of mere humanity, but whom it is no more a sin to kill than it is to slaughter a sheep. All that is required to render the murderous deed legitimate, is to mutter *bizmillah* (in the name of God!) before it is committed.

It was therefore the wish of all, that the army

should take its departure for Bagdad. But as it may be supposed, no one durst express this wish to his Excellency, who was presumed to be engrossed with improvements in the administration of the country, having had frequent conversations with the Governor on the subject. With blind selfishness, the latter longed to see Zobeir and Soug-el-Schiouq treated as Mohamera had been. He declared that if these two towns were burnt and destroyed, Bassora would become the centre of trade; where the merchants of these other places would be forced to settle, and that a stop could then be put to smuggling. I had endeavoured to point out to the Pacha the extreme impolicy of destroying Mohamera, and represented that it would have been much more to his interest to have established his authority there. I made use of the same argument in favour of the threatened towns, but the Turks attach more glory to destroying than to founding. He who has razed a city, and sown salt on its site is, in their history, a much more illustrious character than the founder of flourishing towns. That my advice was listened to, was probably owing to the circumstance that the Sheikh of the Chahabs, returning from Dorah to Mohamera as soon as the Pacha had left it, expelled with ignominy the person appointed as his successor.

The folly of expeditions, whose only object is pillage, and whose result is conflagration, became at length apparent to the Pacha. He was aware that, before long, Mohamera would rise again from its ashes, and that Zobeir and Soug-el-Schiouq, if demolished, would follow its example. As he

could not leave lasting traces of his vengeance, he resolved not to wreak it at all. Subsequent events justified his foresight. Before he had reached Bagdad, all the new Sheikhs had been expelled, and the destruction of Mohamera was the only result of that campaign.

Determined at last to quit Bassora, the Pacha filled up the different appointments in his gift. Mehemet Tchelebi was confirmed as Governor. and emancipated himself from the control of the head of the Customs at Bagdad, by farming the customs on his own account. The Pacha installed him with unusual pomp; conferred the investiture upon him in his own tent, in the midst of the army; then returned with him to the town, and preceded him to the palace of the government. They were both on horseback, and followed by their officers on foot. The next appointment was that of Turki Bilmez to the post of Capitan Pacha, but it was not conferred without opposition. Mehemet Tchelebi, who would probably have been glad to follow the example of Ali Usta, and with this view sought to make friends in India, did not relish the idea of being watched by Turki Bilmez, who was not deficient in resolution. He was, nevertheless, forced to submit to that appointment, and to install him at the arsenal. The office of Cadi was conferred on a droll personage in the Pacha's suite, who immediately after his appointment gave me a proof of his qualifications.

I had in my service, as porter, an old man who was once a jeweller and had been unfortunate in business. He was standing one day before my door when a boy in the Pacha's service, thought

that he recognized him: he had really seen the man at Bagdad, where his father had lent the jeweller about £16. When he was sure of his point, the youth applied to the Cadi in order to obtain the money. The borrower had repaid it, and produced in court a receipt signed by eight witnesses. The Cadi required the presence of the witnesses; four of them were dead, two had fled to Gren, and no one knew where the other two were. The porter was nevertheless sentenced to pay the debt over again, and came to tell me of his ill-luck. I sent my Janissary to the Cadi to ask for an explanation of the proceeding; the latter was quite astonished when he learned from Ibrahim Agha that the defendant was in my service.

"Is it possible," said he, addressing Ibrahim Agha, "that the man can belong to your establishment and did not say a word about it? Was there ever such an idiot! Had I but known this, I would have nonsuited his adversary. But there is still a way," added he after a moment's reflection, "to put the thing to rights. The Pacha leaves in three days, and the young vagabond will either accompany him or remain here. If he leaves, there's an end of the matter; should he remain, I shall require of him a power of attorney from his father to receive the money. It will take him a fortnight to procure that document; by that time the Pacha will be far enough away, and I shall have nothing to fear; so the boy shall have a couple of hundred stripes or so by way of payment. I know perfectly well that your porter does not owe him anything; it was to oblige a creature of his Excellency's that I decided as I did."

After appointing the Cadi, the nominations of

a Sheikh of Zobeir, and of a Masraf took place; and the official administration of the country was then complete.

From what had previously befallen my despatches, it was very evident that it would be of no use for me to remain at Bassora after the Pacha's departure. It was arranged that the couriers should no longer come direct from Constantinople, and that the old mode of communication by the English post, viâ Bagdad, should be again resorted to.

I had in vain urged our embassy at Constantinople to open negotiations with the Porte and the Pacha of Egypt, for the institution of a posting department, which, if the plan had been adapted to the customs of the country, would have met with eager support. I represented that it was ridiculous to leave the only public establishments in Turkey and Egypt, in which there was any regularity, in the hands of foreigners. Whether our embassy was unacquainted with these obstacles and with the way of surmounting them, or whether it preferred bestowing its attention, as usual, upon great political questions, (the National Guard, for instance), I was never honoured with a reply. I could not, with propriety, entrust my despatches to the care of the Arabs, and I had solicited my recall. The inquiries to which my attention had been especially directed had been made, as well as the experiments on the navigation of the Euphrates; and the expedition of the Pacha had settled the question relative to Mohamera. My presence was no longer needed, and joyfully did I avail myself of the order which had been given me to proceed to Bombay. Neither was I sorry to escape from the dangers of

the climate, and the solitude to which I had been so long condemned.

My last public act, and that which I fulfilled with the most satisfaction, was to take leave of the Pacha, the Governor, and the other authorities. I felt no regret in parting with them, and my earnest wish in quitting the country was that I might never more revisit it, or have aught hereafter to do with its infamous rulers. I must here observe, that if in Turkey there is some difficulty in forming a Consulate, it cannot be suppressed all at once by a ministerial order: this would be deceiving all those who have promoted its establishment, who have placed themselves under its protection, and who have given it importance. Had I merely shut up my house and taken down the flag, my servants and every other person who had shown any good feeling towards me would have been persecuted. I therefore availed myself of that article of our treaties with Turkey, which authorizes a Consul to nominate a substitute. I accordingly appointed M. Raymond my successor, and took care not to mention that I should not return. It was not until after I had taken these preliminary steps that I paid my farewell visit to the Pacha on the day of his departure. I found his Excellency in his tent, and this time I could not escape his European music, which serenaded him while I was present.

Accompanied by his cavalry, he set out for Bagdad by the shortest route whilst the main body of his army followed the bank of the river, and guarded the boats which conveyed the baggage. The whole was under the command of Sarcoch Pacha, whom I went to see the following day. I

found him in a furious passion, because the men required to tow the boats had not made their appearance, and the brandy which he was drinking, to drown the disappointment, did not tend to calm his rage. He threatened to return to the town and cut off the head of the Governor, to whom he ascribed the delay. He was quite capable of putting his threat into execution, for he had done the very same thing to a Mutselim, who had refused him a sum equal to £32. I therefore purposely prolonged my visit till he was dead drunk; he was then carried on board his boat, and on the tide flowing, all the craft moved off, and the town once more enjoyed peace.

Sarcoch Pacha was originally scullion of a regiment at Constantinople, and used to amuse his comrades by his drunken pranks; Sultan Mahmoud took a fancy to him in consequence, and advanced him by rapid promotion. When he offered to raise him to the rank of Pacha, provided he would give up drinking, Sarcoch objected to the condition. The Grand Seignor, delighted with this heroism, appointed him Pacha, with permission to get drunk, of which he failed not to avail himself: hence he received the name of Sarcoch or drunkard. He was extremely proud of it, and explained to me with great zeal how he had acquired it. My intercourse with the authorities ceased with this visit, after which I transferred my charge to M. Raymond, and made preparations for my departure.

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